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CONTENTS

DECEMBER
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VOL. 40
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444 Glory Be!
Leonard E. Read
Aspiring to serve freedom and truth.

446 *Kun Shou You Dou:* Even a Cornered Beast Will Fight
Marcella Smith
An American language teacher learns a lesson in practical Chinese politics.

454 You Missed the Point, Bernie
Donald G. Smith
No, it *isn't* in the Constitution.

456 The Taproots of Political Corruption
William H. Peterson
Tracing a pattern of majoritarianism and interventionism.

460 "Socialism Works"
Evelyn Pyburn
Dissecting an obvious untruth.

461 Affirmative Action: The New Road to Serfdom
Steven Yates
To what extent is affirmative action compatible with the principles of a free and open society?

473 Book Reviews
John Chamberlain reviews *Basic Communism* by Clarence B. Carson.

475 Index for 1990

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IDEAS ON LIBERTY

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Senior Editors: Beth A. Hoffman, Brian Summers
Contributing Editors: Bettina Bien Greaves, Edmund A. Opitz, Paul L. Poirot
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PERSPECTIVE

Bad Charity Drives Out Good

In early America, some poverty (brought about by calamity such as fire and earthquake, or by crippling accident or early death) was seen as the result of God's Providence. Some was the result of business failure, not always the entrepreneur's fault. Much, however, was seen as self-created through drunkenness, laziness, or other sinful behavior. The need to determine and administer the exact type of aid required in each case placed significant demands not only on the poor, but also on the more fortunate, who were expected to give of their time as well as their treasure. It is estimated that over half of New York's wealthiest one percent donated part of their leisure time to helping the poor or the sick prior to the Civil War, a pattern found in other large cities.

Particularly significant are the changes caused by the economic and social conditions that developed toward the end of the century. When communities were generally small, personal involvement was easy; but large-scale urbanization brought economic segregation. The better-off could ride to work on broad avenues instead of walking through a variety of wards, and many churches followed their wealthier members uptown or out of town. The more fortunate would be less likely to face need directly. . . .

Some charitable groups became "simply relief societies." Able-bodied individuals who did not wish to work learned to go from agency to agency; and some were said to receive aid from many different groups, their income related to the number of tears shed and false stories told. In a parallel to Gresham's Law, bad charity was able to drive out good.

—MARVIN N. OLASKY
writing in the July 1990
issue of *Alternatives in Philanthropy*.

Voices from the Black Community

By cunning propaganda, and for obvious reasons, our leaders have turned politics into a religion among blacks. Masters at standing truth on its head, they've sold us the bill of goods that politics brings prosperity. Nothing could be further from the truth. Politics translates into economic benefits

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for those few who are elected to office, not for the masses who vote for them.

Economist Thomas Sowell has shown repeatedly, in his comprehensive works on ethnic groups, that it is those groups that studiously avoid political involvement that achieve prosperity and rise to the top. It's only after achieving affluence that other groups turn their attention to politics. Success in politics has never been necessary for economic advancement, nor has it ever been translated into upward mobility.

Other groups know enough to distrust the fickleness of political trends. They figure out early that the political pendulum swings back and forth, according to ever-changing public opinion, and that government policies are necessarily tied to trends that cannot be depended upon in the long run. Today, the pendulum swings left, tomorrow to the right.

Yet, here we are expending vast resources and precious energies on one election after another, trying to keep the pendulum from swinging one way or another way, instead of taking our cue from other groups and concentrating our efforts on economic enterprise. Last year, both *The New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* reported on what everybody already knows, that America's Korean immigrants behave like all groups before them. They literally take care of business and pay no attention to the political high jinks going on around them. How many Korean mayors can you count?

—ELIZABETH WRIGHT, Editor
writing in the Winter 1990 issue of
Issues and Views, an open forum on
issues affecting the black community.

The majority of black youth and young adults are not the street brawling ignoramuses seen on the front pages of newspapers and on the evening news.... The majority of us are decent people who deserve a better image than the one we're being given by the violent few among us. But we have to disassociate ourselves from these people, and remain firm in our moral and ethical codes of behavior that prohibit us from acting out our anger in violent ways, no matter how justified.

Despite our past problems with police and other officials, we have to support efforts to prosecute the small number of criminals who commit violent acts against other blacks in our communities and who, by their actions, show contempt for the law. Those of us who believe in obeying laws against the destruction of property, assault of other human beings, and other unnecessary acts of crime and violence outnumber those who don't, and it's time, past time, that we stop aiding and abetting these criminals with our silence, or by coming to their defense....

—from an editorial in the December 5, 1989,
Toledo Journal, quoted in the Winter 1990
issue of *Issues and Views*.

Freeman Columns Pass the 1,200 Mark

What do the *Cleveland Plain Dealer, Indianapolis Star, Orange County Register, Tampa Tribune, Allentown Morning Call, Colorado Springs Gazette, Camden Courier-Post, Sacramento Union, New York City Tribune, Diario La Hora* (Guatemala), *La Prensa* (Argentina), *El Diario de Caracas* (Venezuela), *Libre Empresa* (Bolivia), *Ultima Hora* (Dominican Republic), *Diario Xalapa* (Mexico), and *La Prensa* (Honduras) have in common? They are among the more than 200 newspapers in the U.S. and Latin America that have carried *Freeman* articles, specially prepared and sent out from FEE several times a month for the past four years. FEE's op-ed program has now received more than 1,200 tearsheets, with new newspapers being added to the list every month. If you see a *Freeman* article in your local paper, we would very much appreciate it if you would send us a copy.

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THE FREEMAN
IDEAS ON LIBERTY

Glory Be!

by Leonard E. Read

True glory consists in doing what deserves to be written; in writing what deserves to be read; and in so living as to make the world happier and better for our living in it.

—Pliny the Elder

The Roman naturalist Pliny the Elder was born in 23 A.D. When he passed away at the age of 56, he had written 37 books on the nature of the physical universe—including geography, anthropology, zoology, botany, and other related subjects.

Pliny did, indeed, leave the world happier and better for having lived in it. He lived every moment of his life with zest—enthusiasm—perhaps the greatest stimulus for noble works. Wrote Emerson: "Every great and commanding movement in the annals of the world is the triumph of enthusiasm. Nothing great was ever accomplished without it."

The following is an attempt to think through and to understand Pliny's three parts of True Glory. If even partially successful, I will make a small contribution to the displacement of that which should be neither written nor read.

True glory consists in doing what deserves to be written. It consists in noble deeds worth recording. This is to be distinguished from blatant notoriety. History presents far more writings of the latter sort than the former. Alexander the Great, Charlemagne, Napoleon, Hitler, Stalin, and countless other great destroyers loom too large in written history.

Why these lopsided recordings? It is the bad, not the good, that attracts the public eye. Observe today's media and the preponderance of reporting that does not *deserve* to be either written or read, spoken or heard.

In my study of writing that deserves to be written, I've been surprised that most of the world's great writers—past and present—never kept a daily journal. Obviously, they had other disciplines that brought out their remarkable writings. We are all different in all respects. As for me, I have kept a journal for nearly 27 years without missing a day—capturing every thought that comes to mind or that I have learned from others—a rewarding experience. What a discipline—writing such entries for nearly 10,000 days!

Recently I came upon my entry of August 11, 1955, long since forgotten:

> If it were not for the gravitational force pulling us down, there would be no such concept as "up."
>
> If there were no darkness, we would have no sense or appreciation of light.
>
> If there were no evil, we would have no awareness of virtue.
>
> If there were no ignorance, we would not know intelligence.
>
> If there were no troubles, there would be no aspirations.
>
> If there were no insecurity, we would not know of security.
>
> If there were no blindness, we would not be con-

Leonard E. Read founded the Foundation for Economic Education in 1946 and served as its President until his death in 1983. He was a philosopher, teacher, and exemplar. This article was adapted from the December 1978 Freeman.

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scious of perception.

If there were no poverty, we would not experience riches.

If no man ever imposed restraint on others, *there would be no striving for liberty and the term would not exist.*

I now recall discovering, just a few days later, while reading Dagobert Runes' *Treasury of Philosophy*, that around 500 B.C. Heraclitus was saying the same thing: "Men would not have known the name of justice if there were no injustice." This made me laugh at my "originality" and brought to mind Goethe's assertion: "All truly wise ideas have been thought already thousands of times."

Assuming the above observations to be valid, then "doing what deserves to be written" is learning how to cope with and overcome life's countless obstacles. It is an observed fact that the art of becoming—human development—is composed of acts of overcoming.

Obstacles are assuredly the source of aspirations. Human frailties—which lead to such things as governmental interventions of the kind that destroy creative activities—inspire their own overcoming. Why, then, do errors have their value? Their overcoming leads to evolution—human liberty!

True glory consists in writing what deserves to be read. There are countless thousands of books, articles, and commentaries that deserve to be read. The vast majority of these writings are known to a mere handful of people. I shall refer to only one that is an inspiring and instructive example: *You Are Extraordinary* by Roger J. Williams.

Professor Williams, a noted biochemist, became convinced that his wife's death was caused by the doctor treating her as "an equal," rather than as an individual. This led the professor to his first study in human variation, having to do only with the variation in taste buds in different people. The findings, published in *Free and Unequal*, are fantastic.

Having an unusually inquiring mind, he began an investigation into ever so many other forms of variation. The findings appeared in 1956: *Biochemical Individuality,* somewhat technical for lay readers. Nevertheless, I read it with avidity, because it contained an important key to the freedom philosophy. It was this book that led to my acquaintance with the author.

We corresponded, and after answering a question of mine he added that he had just written a book, to be entitled *You Are Extraordinary*, designed, he said, for lay readers. The manuscript was enclosed.

Professor Williams was extraordinary. So are you and so am I and so is each human being. Indeed, no one is the same as a moment ago. Variation is a rule of all life—plant, animal, and man.

Once variation is recognized as a fact of life, there can be no endorsement—none whatsoever—of know-it-alls controlling the creative actions of you or me or anyone. Authoritarianism dismissed as utter nonsense! We would witness hosts of public officials reduced to a mere fraction thereof. All but a few would return to that wonderful status of *self-responsible* citizens—America's miraculous performance on the go again.

True glory consists in so living as to make the world happier and better. How do we live to make others happier and better? Here are a few guidelines, mostly gleaned from others:

- Stand for and staunchly abide by what is believed to be righteous—seeking approval from God, not man.
- Strive for that excellence in the understanding and explanation of freedom which will cause others to seek one's tutorship. This brings happiness to both the striver and the seeker—and the world!
- Live with zest and enthusiasm. Nothing great was ever accomplished in the absence of such spirit.
- Be optimistic. This does not mean a blindness to dictocrats lording it over us. Rather, it is self-assurance that a turnabout is in the offing. The world is not going to the dogs as the prophets of doom proclaim. Optimism increases happiness for it is contagious.

To serve truth and freedom is as high as we can go. When more of us than now attain this intellectual and moral height, the path toward glory will open:

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. □

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Kun Shou You Dou: Even a Cornered Beast Will Fight

by Marcella Smith

I stood watching the Yellow Sea slide onto the sands of eastern China. In the distance, a fairy-tale pagoda rose above red-tiled German villas, remnants of this resort town's European past. The calm sea soothed me; I held my husband's hand, thinking what a lovely place this would be for a vacation. But it was no vacation. We had come here to leave China, and leave quickly. With barely two days' notice, we had frantically packed, spent our useless Chinese money like crazed game show contestants, and made for the coast. We would fly out to Hong Kong the next day. It was June 1989: Chinese students and citizens, peacefully seeking democracy, had been murdered by the People's Army in the streets of Beijing.

Ahead on the beach, a crowd hummed and pointed. A student was walking straight into the sea, fully clothed. He plunged directly into the cold water, steadily advancing, his loose shirt floating in a halo around his waist. A Chinese friend of ours scuttled down to the water's edge. "Think of your family," he called. "They will be disgraced by your actions."

The young man turned back.

My husband Matt and I had traveled to China to teach English at a college in Taian, a city of over 250,000 people. Taian, a small town by Chinese standards, is located in Shandong, an arid province that juts out toward Korea between the Bohai Sea to the north and the Yellow Sea to the south. Taian is the home of six colleges and of Tai Shan ("Peace Mountain"), the holiest of the sacred mountains of China. I arrived in the early spring of 1989, when Buddhist peasants, mostly round little old ladies tottering on butterfly feet, made their way up thousands of stone steps to the top of the holy mountain, burning paper money for their ancestors, and hoping for the blessing of the gods.

My first day of teaching was April Fool's Day. I was happy to be in China in the spring, happy in my role as the new American teacher. But as I entered the building my mood collapsed. The rank odors of urine and coal smoke permeated the entire building. I had to step around globs of spit in a dark, dirty hallway in order to get to my classroom. I had been told it was the nicest room on campus.

Entering, I breathed a sigh of relief. At least there were windows. I closed the door on the reeking hallway and walked down to the front of the room, greeting my new students as I passed. They answered with nervous nods and small laughs. In China, laughs are an integral part of the language, and you soon learn their meaning. This one meant, "Please don't ask me to speak. I don't know any English."

As the weeks passed, my initial zeal for teaching quickly waned. My students slouched in their chairs, yakked during class, gazed aimlessly out the window, and punctuated my lectures with loud, juicy spitting. They rarely did their homework and never studied for tests. Writing assignments were copied out of encyclopedias. During tests, they opened their books and brazenly asked questions back and forth. When I accused them of cheating, they laughed—a high-pitched, anxious laugh—and denied it. Later, I would get a note. "What you did was very hard on me." I felt guilty about causing my students to "lose face," but continued to slap zeros on the tops of their papers.

Mrs. Smith is a free-lance writer. To protect the identities of the Chinese students, some of the names in this article have been changed.

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"Long Live Sixty"

Soon, I learned a new Chinese saying: "Long Live Sixty," a pun on the Cultural Revolution slogan "Long Live Mao." If you are a college student, no matter how little you apply yourself, you will always receive a passing grade: 60. No one fails. Everyone gets a degree after four years. Your course of study is predetermined by officials. Many students know, even before they enter college, what their work assignments will be after they graduate. If you are interested in architecture, and the Party needs engineers, then a engineer you'll be. Aspiring to continue your education and become a professor is a ludicrous idea. A common simile in China is "as poor as a professor," for educators make less than shoe repairmen, taxi drivers, or vegetable peddlers.

Still, I refused to fall into the complacency the students seemed to demand of me. Determined to give my students what I called a "real" education, I inundated them with writing assignments. Curiously, their initial essays repeated the same stock phrases—eerily similar—over and over: the product, I discovered, of years of mandatory Marxism classes. An in-class assignment on Chinese history elicited identical platitudes on many of my students' papers: "Through science, we can achieve great things." "China had a glorious past, but now we are behind. We must study hard so we can catch up." Their knowledge of the U.S. was also uniform: "The United States has a high divorce rate. Many people take drugs and are sick with AIDS. We must learn technology from the United States, but retain our Chinese values." My students felt most comfortable when I drilled them, a monotone droning of English words in unison, safe from being singled out. It was difficult to get them to speak English individually, but in a group they would speak loudly, with one voice.

There was one student, however, who stood out from the rest, who had his own voice. He sat up in the front of the class, his head tilted to one side, staring at me with large, lively eyes and a rakish grin. He was the only student in my class who chose his own English name—"Daniel"; the others passively waited for me to give them a name, absolving personal responsibility even in the simplest of things. He was the only one who asked questions ("How many black people are there in America?"), the only one who dove into writing assignments with glee, the only one who, during quiet moments, I could hear repeating a new English word over and over to himself. He was also the only one who wanted to be in the class. All the others had been mandated to take the class and weren't concerned with learning English: Long Live Sixty. Daniel, however, had saved up three months' salary to pay for these classes, and the rare privilege of hearing a native speaker of English. He made the most of it—asking questions after class, sharing meals with me and my husband. Within one month, he went from being barely understandable to virtually fluent.

"Kun Shou You Dou"

Daniel and I shared a love of language, and quickly became friends. He delighted in American slang, and we enjoyed discussing the ways in which language reflects culture. We traded idioms back and forth, amazed at similarities: both Chinese and English share expressions such as "putting the cart before the horse" and "killing two birds with one stone." One idiom he taught me was *kun shou you dou*, or "even a cornered beast will fight." We used it laughingly at games of cards: I would be points ahead of Daniel, clearly the winner, but he would laugh and shout "*kun shou you dou*," refusing to resign himself to defeat.

One day, Daniel sadly told me of his earlier education. In the 1960s, anti-intellectual Maoists had staffed the schools with peasants; as a result Daniel's education had been so poor that he was unable to pass his college entrance exams. So he taught himself the building trade and, even though he lacked formal education, was now teaching construction at a local college, using what money he could save to pay for college courses. He understood my frustration with the apathy of his classmates, and prevailed upon me to understand that most students in China no longer see higher education as a way to advancement. Daniel, the son of teachers, was one of the few who valued learning for learning's sake.

So, if higher education is seen as worthless, how does a student get ahead? The only way is through cultivating *guanxi*, which means "special relationship" or "connections." *Guanxi* is an integral part of daily life, an unavoidable necessity. The word itself is rarely spoken by Chinese, and when it is, is cloaked with a laugh. It is more frequently spoken

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by foreigners who unwittingly find themselves trapped in a system with no alternatives. *Guanxi* is more overtly expressed in the word *meiyou*, a word spoken with such frequency that it is one of the first words a visitor learns in China. *Meiyou* means, literally, "not have." In one sense, *meiyou* means "I haven't got it, I can't get it, this government is too corrupt for anything to work smoothly." You hear the word every time you ask for anything, from cooking oil to plane tickets. When a shopkeeper says "*meiyou*," it is an invitation to press him harder—perhaps with money, more likely with a "back door," someone you know who is part of that person's *guanxi* network. In a situation where the person has power over you, *meiyou* really means "Give me something and I'll talk to my friend (or cousin, or father-in-law) about it." Unless you are the child of a cadre, born with *guanxi*, it is very difficult to have power as a young person, for power comes from amassing a network of "special relationships," and that network, integral to survival, comes only through time.

Corruption

Guanxi is not just an easier way to get things done; it's the only way. *Guanxi* penetrates Chinese society like a cancer, crippling individual initiative. In China, to be ambitious one must also be corrupt; the most honest and diligent people are often found in positions of the least power. If you're a student, and you want to go to America to study, and you work hard until you're at the top of your field and study English until you can speak it better than your teachers, then when an opportunity comes up for a visiting scholar position in your field in the United States, you see the university president's son-in-law, who can say "hello" and "good-bye" in English and knows little of your field, packing his bags to get on the plane to go take the position that belongs to *you*. This happened to a good friend of ours. Her reaction? Not rage, as you would expect, but a certain resigned sorrow and, of course, a small laugh.

The corruption of *guanxi* permeates every layer of society in China, from the old woman selling vegetables on the street to the highest officials. If flour is being rationed, then the clerk sells it to friends and to those who can return favors. Deng Xiaoping's son benefits greatly from his "special relationship"—he is now a millionaire.

However, unlike in Western societies, the corruption of men in power isn't reported in the Chinese media. Mention it and you get still another laugh, meaning, "We don't talk about that." *The China Daily*, our most accessible paper, was a Party tabloid dripping with "good news." Front-page stories chronicled the success of industries, the bravery and heroism of citizens, the progress of the Four Modernizations. Educated Chinese never take the media seriously; its amateurish propaganda is aimed at the peasant class, who make up the vast majority of Chinese citizens. Our friends were quite adept at deciphering the "news": "Oh look," they would say. "Pictures of Deng exercising in the park! He must be dying."

The Life of a Student

The debilitating effects of *guanxi* and a distorted press would be enough to explain the apathy of my students, but in addition to being powerless to effect any real changes in their lives, they also face appalling living conditions. Student dormitories are worse than the worst U.S. slums. (A Chinese delegation visiting Houston asked to be shown the "slums" they had read about, and then didn't believe they were being shown real slums. In their world, government officials would never show foreign guests the country's insufficiencies, and besides, back home, many people live in similar —or worse—conditions.) The student dorms are shoddy looking buildings, victims of poor craftsmanship and lack of upkeep, with broken windows, littered stairwells—in stark contrast to the beautifully constructed temples that still stand after centuries. A standard joke in China is that you can't tell whether a building is being torn down or put up, because the materials and craftsmanship are so pathetic.

A dormitory's stench forms a cloud around the buildings that can be smelled from half a block away. "Sanitary engineering" is a Western technology the Chinese haven't quite mastered. The toilets don't work, but continue to be used. Sinks and corners become urinals when the toilets are full. As many as eight people live in a small room with bare cement or dirt floors. The plumbing (when there is plumbing) rattles, clogs, and moans. Cold, unpotable water is turned on three times a day for half an hour. Hot water is unheard of; students fill thermoses for tea from a single rusty boiler on

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campus. Electricity, like water, has long daily outages. Many dorms have no heat in the winters, with temperatures frequently dropping below freezing. The food, served in a filthy dining hall, is barely palatable. Students survive on *mantou*, a soft doughy roll made solely out of white flour and water, and on limp vegetables cooked with bits of gristly meat. Needless to say, students are often sick, and always tired. Long afternoon naps are a custom in China; energy levels are low and sleep is the best way to escape the ennui of student life.

Students spend the bulk of their time away from the dormitories, usually gathering in empty classrooms to "study." Our small apartment, embarrassingly bourgeois compared to the students' rooms, soon became a place to hang out, drink soda, play cards, and chat. Friendships come easily in China, as they are the main form of entertainment. Daniel was one of many frequent visitors, staying for dinner night after night. I could tell that he wished to reciprocate, but was too embarrassed to invite us to his small room. Instead, he taught me to cook elaborate dishes and insisted on spending half a month's salary on a banquet "in our honor" at a local restaurant.

Evenings with Daniel and other students were lively and enjoyable, and caused me to change my initial impressions. Students who seemed barely alive during class burst with enthusiasm over a simple card game; clearly their apathy wasn't inborn, but chosen, as a defense against hopelessness. There was no real reason to work hard in school.

I soon began to see the wisdom of another new Chinese saying, which told of the three types of Chinese students: the *yi to*, the *er go*, and the *san hun*, each with their own way of coping. The *yi to* fervently throw their energy into studying to pass the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), the standard examination required for admission to all English-speaking universities. They pin their hopes on escaping the system by being accepted to study in the U.S., Australia, or Canada. Their chances are slim, and they know it. The *er go* are so named for spending the bulk of their time playing *go ji*, a lightning-fast gambling game that involves six decks of cards, as many quarts of beer, and a great deal of raucous shouting. And the *san hun*, who, by my informal poll, made up the vast majority, were resigned to their fate, frittering away their days, shuffling along with their hands in their pockets and all the time in the world. They played a mean game of ping-pong, and loved to stage mock arguments, which always drew a crowd of even more *san hun*, interjecting comments and laughing.

Daniel was also one of the few students I met who escaped categorization; one of the few who, in spite of great odds, entertained hope for the future. One day as we walked up the hill at the foot of Mount Tai, he spoke, as many others had, of passing the TOEFL, going to the U.S., getting a degree. But then he hesitated. "What I really want to do is study psychology," he said. I was astonished. Psychology is considered a Western evil in China: affirming the individuality of each and every one of us, it goes against the grain of a paternalistic society that wishes to have a nation of subservient people, all thinking the same thoughts—thoughts the government chooses. The works of Freud are banned, and most people don't know that psychology exists. Amazed, I asked him why he had chosen this forbidden subject. He scowled at a cheap plastic buddha on the side of the road, stuffed with money by peasant pilgrims for "good lucky," and said, "Because my people have no spirit."

April 16, 1989

Daniel impressed me with his energy, his dedication, his belief in his ability to make a difference. I grappled with how to impart some of Daniel's spirit into the rest of my students. The morning of April 16, 1989, signaled the beginning of the transformation I was wishing for, but it had nothing to do with my work, and, sadly, it was not to last. When I walked into the classroom that morning, I was greeted with a hubbub of sounds. Instead of slumping at their desks, gazing out the window, my students were standing, wildly gesticulating. Instead of talking quietly, they were arguing, shouting; some looked as though they had been crying. I knew what had raised their spirits to anger and sadness: the death, the day before, of Hu Yaobang, a beloved leader, one of the few who wasn't corrupt.

At last, I thought to myself. A subject that they were interested in. Hu's death could be a catalyst to inspire my students to write, maybe even speak. My students were angry, for the rumor was that Deng Xiaoping and Li Peng had badgered Hu, the "students' friend," to the point of a heart attack. ("His heart was sick for China. Deng Xiaoping killed him," they told me in private.) Word that

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their counterparts in Beijing were walking the streets in protest brought a light to their eyes and an urgency to their speech I had never seen before. I threw out my lesson plan for the day and devoted the whole class to the story of Hu Yaobang, and we wrote a mock newspaper article on the board.

I knew that in China no one talks openly of any topic that is remotely controversial: it is best to pretend the subject doesn't exist, hide your uneasiness behind a laugh, and stay out of trouble. I knew it, but rebelliousness took over, and I delighted in speaking and writing about a forbidden subject. My students delighted in it too, and most of them joined in the exercise, with a few exceptions.

One of those exceptions was the *banzhang*, or "class monitor." Until that day I thought that the monitor's duties were to ensure that I had hot water for tea, and that the blackboards were cleaned at the end of the day. However, I soon learned that the monitor is the highest ranking member of the Communist Party in his class. It was also his duty to report everything said in the classroom back to his leaders.

A Confrontation

That afternoon, my husband left the apartment; within minutes, three older Party members were at my door. (Later, we found that the gatekeeper was told to notify the officials as soon as my husband walked out the college gates.) I poured tea as they sat on the couch across from me: two English teachers, one acting as interpreter, the other ducking his head, hoping I wouldn't expose his poor knowledge of the English language. The third was the leader of the Foreign Language Department, a man we had nicknamed "Fishface" for his total lack of humor and his wide mouth, locked in a perpetual frown, which gave him an amazing resemblance to a grouper.

They made a sad trio: former Red Guards, now in petty positions of power, nostalgic for the glory days of the Cultural Revolution. I could almost sense their history: in their teens, they were on the wave of what was thought to be a new era, a new beginning for China. At that time, they must have felt the same camaraderie and excitement my students felt now, in their own quest for change. But years of institutional brutality and lying to survive had crushed their spirit, until no trace remained. There was none of the humor, the sparkle of friends like Daniel. Just bitterness, set deep in the grooves of their faces, and eyes that never met mine.

"You are an English teacher. You have been given books to teach from. It is your duty to teach your students from these books," the interpreter told me. I sat silent as we acted out our parts, bit players in a farce about the Cultural Revolution. I thought of our friend in Beijing who told us of a man who had been harassed by Red Guards and thrown out a window, breaking both his legs. But this was the 1980s, the decade of openness. I was only caught up, temporarily, in the old habits of these sad people. Fine, fine, I thought—I'll teach out of the boring old book. Just leave.

They made their point quickly. No mention was made of my class that day, of Hu's death, or of the student unrest in Beijing. I was curious about their thoughts, and cautiously broached the subject. The three nervously glanced at each other; Fishface laughed, his mouth struggling to retain its downward grimace. "Oh, ha-ha-ha-ha-ha," he said. "Do not worry. We are taking care of it. It will end soon. You are in Taian—a small city—a problem like that would never happen here."

But the demonstrations in Beijing were not over. They swelled in size, and went from mourning a great man's death to an outright attack on corruption and the specious media—what the demonstrators called "vestiges of feudalism." Students from our city rode the train eight hours north to Beijing to support their peers; soon the train conductors, in solidarity with the students' cause, gave free transportation to students in and out of the capital. News of the movement spread rapidly on the college grapevine, and my students continued their energetic discussions during their free time.

Then, on the night of April 28, as my husband and I lay asleep in bed, the windows open for coolness, I was startled awake by a sound—a muffled roar—was it a dream?—was it the pilgrims climbing the mountain?—no, they were always just chattering, nothing like this. And it was far away, down by the river, like a rushing of wind. I woke Matt, and we went out onto the porch. It was definitely a roar, like a crowd of people. Perhaps some festival we didn't know about. Puzzled, we went back to bed.

The next morning Matt left for an early class, but reappeared within minutes, breathless. "No class today! I'm going to a demonstration!" he shouted, grabbing his camera and flying down the stairs. It was the continuation of a large demon-

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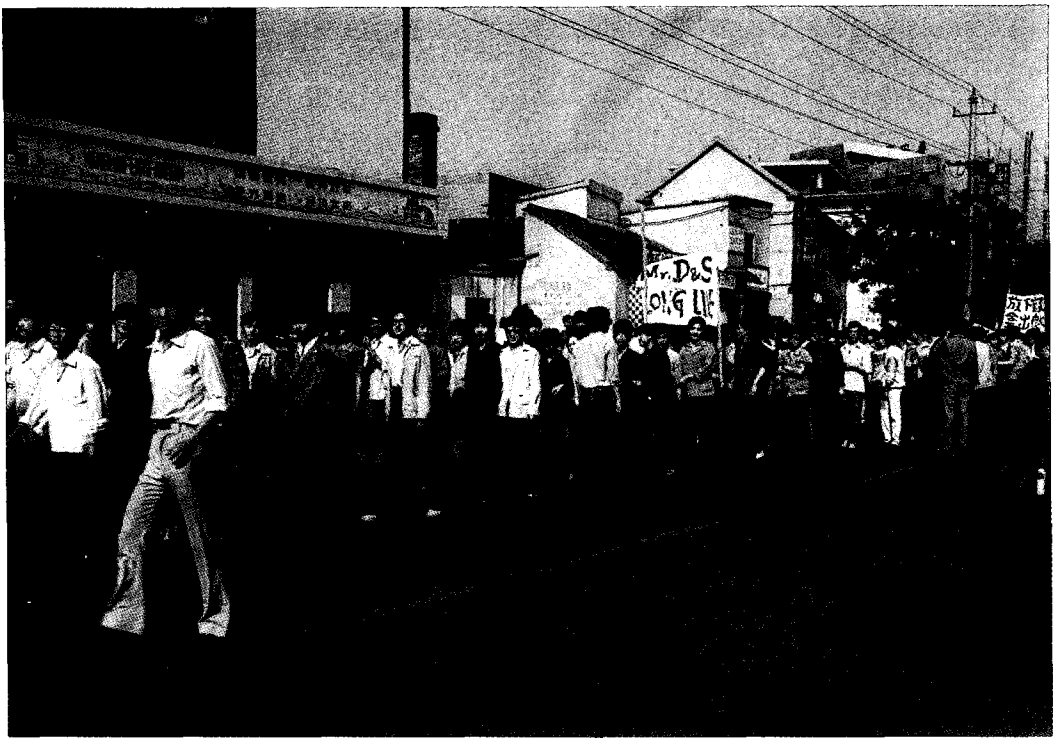

Student demonstrators in Taian.

stration from the night before, born at the Teachers' College and growing to include thousands of students from all the colleges in town.

"They threw chairs out the windows! They knocked down the gates of the school!" my students excitedly told me. The president of the Teachers' College had told Beijing that Shandong students did not support the pro-democracy movement, and word of his report infuriated the students, sparking a riot. No support! In the days that followed it seemed as though every student in town was on the street, chanting "Down with Li Peng!" From Jinan, a city an hour north of us, came stories of demonstrations exceeding 100,000, with the students lying down on the railroad tracks to block army trains. Every campus in every city in China was rallying in support of their brothers and sisters in Tiananmen Square. Big-character posters, painted rapidly to show the urgency of their message, bloomed on campus walls, disseminating news from Beijing. Classes were boycotted: no time for such things, there was work to be done! For the first time ever, I saw students *running*—dashing enthusiastically to rallies—an astounding sight after being accustomed to seeing them shuffle along like rag dolls.

The visits from Fishface and his entourage continued. Since the students were boycotting classes, I had stopped going down to my room every day; many of the students had gone to Beijing, and the rest were busy with daily demonstrations. "You must go to your classroom," he told me. They had rounded up some *guanxi* students, obsequious sons and daughters of cadres, who would serve as my students until the "trouble" passed; it was important to Fishface and his ilk that things appear as normal as possible. Walking down to class, an older cadre-member caught up with me. "Ah, going to class?" he said, satisfied at the appearance of normality. In the classroom, as always, I heard the same lines, repeated in robot fashion. Asking one of my "students" to translate a hastily scrawled character poster plastered to the wall, she ignored my request, saying: "The students must be in the classroom. It is their duty to study."

Daniel as "Hooligan"

Daniel visited our apartment every day now, regaling us with tales of the pro-democracy movement, improving his English by leaps and bounds.

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We laughed and called him "hooligan," Li Peng's term for the bad element that was causing all this "trouble." Daniel told us of large character posters he had printed: one was a petition stating the students' demands for a free press and an end to corruption. Grinning, he said that for the first signature, he had forged the name of the college president. He proudly marched through town with a homemade sign saying "Hello, Mr. D"—the students' affectionate name for democracy.

It was spring, and there was a heady feeling all around. The students now had a vehicle for their pent-up frustrations, a hint of hope that they could change their fate. It was as though energy and exuberance had been lying in an underground stream, waiting to bubble up. One day, while I watched a demonstration, one of my students who never spoke English in class ran up to me exclaiming, "Miss Marcella! We are marching for free!"

When, on June 4, 1989, the blow finally fell, so too fell the brief hopes of those brave, frustrated students. The night of June 3 we watched the television news, and knew by the reports (the army's duty is to protect the students . . . the soldiers have been ordered to defend themselves . . .) that students would be killed. Still, our Chinese friends denied the possibility. "Oh, no-no-no-no," they said, waving their hands, dissembling their fears with laughter. "The People's Army would never kill the people."

The morning news reported 40 dead. As the numbers climbed into the hundreds, then past a thousand, we sat rigidly by the radio, waiting for the hourly reports of the BBC and Voice of America. By the evening of June 4, we knew it was time to leave.

All the next day we attempted to contact school officials, but they were in a meeting, agreeing, we assumed, on the standard Party response to the massacre. Finally, that evening, we sat down with the vice president of the college. As always, tea was poured, and pleasantries were exchanged before getting down to business. My husband and I were angry, firm in our convictions. We no longer had any patience with Chinese protocol. "We cannot stay in a country that murders its children," we said. "We want to leave China as soon as possible." "Oh, ha-ha-ha-ha," the vice president answered. "Why are you so worried? Why don't you wait and see? There is nothing to worry about. Taian is a small, peaceful town. Nothing will happen here."

He clearly wanted us to continue going about business as usual, pretending nothing had happened. We mentioned to him that over a thousand had been murdered. "Oh, huh-huh-huh. Not so many have been killed. Not so many as that. You do not have to worry. You are not in danger. There will be no more trouble. It is over now." "Besides," he continued, "how do you know the Voice of America and the BBC are not lying? You yourself have said that your American press is not always truthful." Cringing, I remembered an earlier question-and-answer session where I had innocently delved into the "inadequacies" of the American media.

"You Are Not in Danger"

The crushing of the pro-democracy movement confirmed the bleak circumstances of the students. Students who, a week before, were marching and shouting in the streets, were back to shuffling, avoiding the Americans, and speaking of the movement only behind closed doors. It was as if nothing had happened. Mention of the Tiananmen atrocities brought the same response, repeated *ad infinitum*: "You are not in danger."

No matter what we said, the rationalization that the idiot Americans were fleeing, fearful of being ripped apart by an angry mob of counterrevolutionaries, prevailed. They seemed truly unable to understand our motivations. Of course it wasn't danger we were worried about, although certainly that was foremost in the minds of our loved ones back home, who were unable to reach us. We knew that the officials wanted us—the highly visible Americans—to stay in the classroom, drilling our students with boring lessons, "proving" that everything was all right. "You must stay," we were told. "Think of your duty to your students." It was our duty to our students that made us leave. We could not pretend nothing had happened. The only way to support them was to make the physical statement of leaving, to create a visible absence that would show that we did not tolerate the actions of the Chinese government.

Starving for news, we turned on the television. Scenes of happy workers, satisfied in serving their country, were now the dominant theme. "Ah," Daniel would tell us, "that means the workers in Beijing are joining the fight." Footage of the students "peacefully leaving" Tiananmen Square was

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shown: it was an old clip of a demonstration, shot from the rear. Scenes of students setting fire to tanks and close-ups of dead and mutilated People's Liberation Army (PLA) soldiers were aired repeatedly: the Counterrevolutionaries Attack Peace-loving Members of the People's Army. The commanding general of the PLA held a press conference, saying, "No one was killed in Tiananmen." And the media continued to implicate foreign influence, especially American influence, in the "student trouble," causing some of our Chinese friends to become increasingly nervous about their contact with us.

Still, brave "counterrevolutionaries" within the news media were able to get their message out: one night, soon after the massacre, a newscaster, dressed in black, hung his head while he broadcast lies written by the government; he was never seen again. Another night the English service news broadcast was canceled; in its place savvy technicians ran a documentary about funeral customs. In the middle of the documentary, a red cross was displayed for 30 seconds, telling viewers that the Red Cross figure of over a thousand dead was accurate.

To counter the propaganda, we had news from students who had recently returned from Beijing. They wrote their stories on huge sheets of white paper, in black characters splattered with drops of red. The PLA was arresting students getting off of trains in Jinan, and was placing tanks at intersections, so the students would continue on to our smaller, safer town. "The soldiers of the 27th army were shot up with amphetamines before their rampage," we were told. "They crushed the bodies with tanks, bulldozed them into piles, and burned them, so no one would know how many. Beijing was covered with a cloud of putrid smoke." And they brought with them the chilling rumor of civil war: "The 38th army is on the outskirts of Beijing, preparing to fight the 27th."

And, when the stations weren't jammed by the government, we listened to the scratchy broadcasts of the Voice of America and the BBC. "Foreign diplomats' residences were riddled with machine gun fire yesterday." Good grief, we thought. If they're shooting at the diplomats, what about the lowly foreign teachers? We thought of our families back home watching film of the carnage, news we were unable to see.

Almost two weeks after the massacre, we still seemed unable to persuade the school officials to assist us in leaving. Rumors were that the trains into Shanghai were blocked, and everyone knew Beijing was a madhouse. We worried about our families worrying about us, for there was no way to communicate with them. We began to wonder if we would ever leave. The school officials seemed desperate to have us stay; we were their only visible symbols of normalcy. Suddenly, on a Wednesday, they brought us news of train tickets booked for us that Friday. We would travel to the coast and fly out to Hong Kong. I began to pack.

Our friends wept openly; in China it is customary to cry at the parting of friends, and it was cathartic. Our friendships, though short, ran deep. I knew that, like me, they were also crying for China. I felt as though I were abandoning them: we were leaving, and they could not. There was news of executions in Jinan—not of students, but of workers, for strikes were what the government feared most. We were concerned about Daniel's safety. He had thrown himself heart and soul into the pro-democracy movement, and had been quite visible. "Go home," we told him. "Back to the countryside. Dirty up your clothes. Grow vegetables." But this advice only made him laugh. "If they kill me because of my actions, let them," he smiled. "There are 1.1 billion of us. They cannot kill us all."

Out through the "Back Door"

In the end, events intensified. It was as though China were kicking us, to make sure we got the point. Storekeepers and restaurant owners struggled frantically to cheat us, knowing they would not see foreigners—and their money—for a long while. We had to use a "back door" and bribery to wangle tickets to Hong Kong from a travel agent who was laden with expensive jewelry, the by-product of her profession. In the hotel lobby, we were constantly dodging a chuckling little man with a video camera glued to his eye, setting a propaganda trap: "The Happy Americans Untroubled by Recent Events in Beijing." And, in the evening of our last day, we watched as the young student walked into the Yellow Sea.

Late on our last night in China, wide awake and edgy, I sat watching the television show face after face, bright, alert, faces—like Daniel, I thought—all wanted by the PLA. I could decipher the names of the colleges: Beijing University, Beijing

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Iron and Steel. And the names: Wuer Kaixi, Chai Ling . . . and the ages: 22, 23, 19 . . . These were not the faces of criminals. They were China's best and brightest, her only hope for the future. I knew that, if found, they too would be killed. And I feared for Daniel.

Now, back home in the U.S., I make new Chinese acquaintances. They are outgoing at first when they hear I have visited their country, but quiet when I tell them I was there the summer of 1989, saying, "We had to leave earlier than planned." Suddenly, there it is again, the same laugh heard so many times in China. It is as if they are afraid Fishface is in the room. "Oh, ha-ha-ha-ha," they say. "Everything is fine now. You can go back. There is no trouble."

And slowly, painfully slowly, the letters trickle in. The first ones talk of sadness at our leaving, of the routine events of the day. No mention of anything political. And, from our best friends, no word at all. We didn't hear from Daniel after writing him two or three times—finally, we received a card at Christmas, with a funny picture and a cryptic message: "I'll write you later, and THEN answer me."

A few weeks later we heard from a friend: "You want to know about Daniel. I met him one month ago. He is o.k. now. But you had better don't write to him directly. He told me he had some trouble in June and July last year. He is afraid of writing to you and receiving your letter." She went on to complain about the increased load of boring "political classes" the students were forced take. "I hate them," she wrote.

And, finally, in February, a letter from one of our brave friends who had been active in the movement. He has passed the TOEFL and been accepted at a university in the U.S., but college officials won't release his educational records. Afraid of further trouble, he sent the following words to us through an intermediary:

I'm very pleasure for receiving your Christmas card. It brought great comfort to me. I know there are my friends concerning with me on the other side of the world. We are not lonely.

I had trouble in the past days. I am on their list, and I refused to do what they told me. My health is not good for near two months. Perhaps that was my good luck, because it help me to pass those days. Thank you! Thank America! Because of America our situation is little better.

Though there is no news on news report we know the news about East Europe. I believe that Mr. D will come to China early or late. □

You Missed the Point, Bernie

by Donald G. Smith

My friend Bernie is a socialist. Now Bernie would never admit to this—he likes to say *enlightened liberal*—but everything he favors seems to wind up with government ownership of something, so I cannot see much distinction between his label and mine. Perhaps I could be kind and say that Bernie is an enlightened liberal who just happens to favor a socialistic solution to all problems.

One of Bernie's favorite arguments is actually a question: "Where in the U.S. Constitution does it say that we are to have a capitalistic economy?"

Mr. Smith is a writer living in Santa Maria, California. He is a frequent contributor to The Wall Street Journal.

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The implication, of course, is that we are not legally bound to any economic system, and therefore we should start forming committees at once to nationalize everything from U.S. Steel to the Girl Scouts.

I had always dismissed the question/statement as totally irrelevant and never even gave it the dignity of a serious counterthrust. In recent days, however, I have taken the time to consider the point, and I think that Bernie has really hit on something—an idea that negates every argument ever presented about the benefits of a planned economy.

The Constitution is a document that deals with *political* freedom and says nothing whatever about an economic system. This is highly significant because it presupposes that a free people will work out a way of doing business that is consistent with the principles of political freedom. In short, capitalism was never planned—it just happened. It is the natural and inevitable result of political freedom.

Socialism, on the other hand, is necessarily the result of a planned economy. No society can ever install a socialistic economy without a massive planning effort. It is something that is born on the conference table, the unnatural result of planning boards pushing an economy in a direction that it doesn't want to go. Is it any wonder that the black market flourishes whenever a planned economy exists? The black market is an unplanned phenomenon that moves like the winds and the tides and cannot be legislated out of existence. It is an illegal kind of unbridled cowboy capitalism that exists solely because it is needed and wanted.

Unfortunately, the inevitability of capitalism in a free society is not recognized by people who look at chickens and see ducks. Karl Marx, for example, had no understanding of American capitalism, seeing the world as he did through the eyes of a 19th-century German. Lenin understood even less, always equating Tsarist Russia with capitalism, and the basis of his life's work was buttressed by this gigantic misconception. The man was unable to see any distinction between private ownership in an autocracy and the rights of a free people to go as far as their talents and energies will take them.

In this regard, I have always been quite impressed with a story told by Nikita Khrushchev during his 1959 visit to the United States. Khrushchev said that as a small boy in the Ukraine he and some friends made a surreptitious visit to a nearby orchard to help themselves to some fruit. They were caught by the landowner, and all but the small Nikita managed to escape. He was unmercifully beaten by his cruel captor and then violently thrown off the property and left to find his way home, if indeed he could still walk. This was to be Nikita Khrushchev's lifelong impression of private land ownership and, consequently, his concept of capitalism.

One can only imagine how many times this minidrama was replayed throughout Tsarist Russia; how many times acts of similar cruelty were accepted as the way the world works when people are allowed to own property. None of them— Marx, Lenin, Khrushchev, nor any of their compatriots—could grasp the idea that private ownership in a despotic, oppressive government has no relationship whatever to a game in which anyone can participate.

My old friend Bernie doesn't even have this excuse because he has seen the capitalistic system at work, even benefited from it. Like most American males, he can look back to a boyhood in which he helped himself to a pilfered apple or orange along the way and received no corporal punishment for the transgression. Nor was he ever forced to work the lands or to clean the stables of the local patroon.

With Bernie, I think, it is his sense of neatness that is offended. Socialism is perceived as a desirable thing because it is planned, which means that all of the bases are covered. Socialism is tidy and capitalism, to the Bernies of the world, is an uncontrolled messy thing that is badly in need of some grooming.

The point that is missed, over and over again, is that this is the very strength of the system. It is not planned, it is not the law of the land, and it is not beholden to a central committee. Capitalism is a natural expression of a free people, the normal and inevitable outgrowth of political liberty. It is, in effect, left to us by the Bill of Rights because it is the only economic system that is compatible with these freedoms.

No, it doesn't appear in the Constitution, Bernie, and this is why it works. You, my old and good friend, have missed the point completely. □

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The Taproots of Political Corruption

by William H. Peterson

How prevalent has political corruption been over recorded history—and how did it originate? Quite an inkling as to its prevalence and origin can be found in a book written by H. J. Haskell and published by Alfred A. Knopf in 1939. The book is *The New Deal in Old Rome.*

Haskell, a newspaperman with the *Kansas City Star*, was both puzzled and inspired in the late 1930s when he and his wife drove across the Pont du Gard, the stone bridge and aqueduct that soars 165 feet above the river bed near Avignon in southern France. This triumph of engineering and architecture was built by the Romans some two millennia earlier. It still stands, mute testimony to the genius of Rome. Yet it raises the question: What happened to the glory that *was* Rome?

The magnificent Pont du Gard cast a spell on Haskell. Perhaps the spell was of the same sort that fascinated Edward Gibbon when he walked along Hadrian's Wall, which demarcates the northern boundary and defense line of Roman Britain. Gibbon went on to write *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, the first volume appearing in 1776.

Back to Haskell. He reflected on the possible meaning of the Pont du Gard and asked himself: Just what kind of a civilization had created such an awesome, durable, and most beautiful structure, survived a thousand years, and then disappeared? And, pondered the American journalist further, why the disappearance? Back in the United States, Haskell discussed these questions with Katharine Dayton, a friend and playwright.

Dr. Peterson, Heritage Foundation adjunct scholar, holds the Lundy Chair of Business Philosophy at Campbell University, Buies Creek, North Carolina.

The time was the Great Depression, the heyday of the New Deal, of massive interventionist measures following in the wake of Federal Reserve expansion and contraction of the money supply in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and of failed Hoover Administration programs—most notably the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1929, the Smoot-Hawley Tariff of 1930, and the Reconstruction Finance Corporation of 1932. But now a number of New Deal programs had also backfired. The depression dragged on, even though FDR and his New Deal won in 1936 by a larger majority than in 1932. Severe unemployment persisted year after year and even escalated in 1938.

Miss Dayton told Haskell of her conversation with eminent antiquity historian and archeologist James Breasted shortly before he died. She had inquired if he had discovered any New Deals in the ancient world. He responded: "Yes, my dear, I've dug up at least a dozen."

Hence the reference to the New Deal in the title of Haskell's book. In it he argued, as had Gibbon, that it was not the strength of the Germanic invaders that sank Rome but the Eternal City's moral and economic corruption. The corruption arose, Haskell held, from a pattern of majoritarianism (popularism) and interventionism (widespread government interference in a market system).

Such interference is seen in the Roman equivalents of, in New Deal terms, a Farm Debt Conciliation Committee, a Resettlement Administration, a Public Works Administration, a Food Relief Administration, a Home Owners Loan Corporation, an Ever-Normal Granary, and so on.

This potpourri of interventionist measures is frequently shorthanded by historians of Rome as

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"bread and circuses." It pushed Rome, Haskell held, into amorality, further intervention, more corruption, bouts of inflation, and eventually into a totalitarian state—all contributing to Rome's decline and fall.

Amorality? Note how Mises similarly plays on "the standards of morality" in commenting on Rome in *Human Action*:

> The marvelous civilization of antiquity perished because it did not adjust its moral code and its legal system to the requirements of the market economy. A social order is doomed if the actions which its normal functioning requires are rejected by the standards of morality, are declared illegal by the laws of the country, and are prosecuted as criminal by the courts and the police. The Roman Empire crumbled to dust because it lacked the spirit of liberalism and free enterprise. The policy of interventionism and its political corollary, the Führer principle, decomposed the mighty empire as they will by necessity always disintegrate and destroy any social entity.

A Timeless How-to Message

Newspaperman Haskell observed that much amorality if not immorality was involved in Roman majoritarianism and interventionism. In this vein, see his references to the *Handbook on Politics* by Quintus Cicero, younger brother of the great Marcus Cicero (B.C. 106-43), leader in the Roman Senate. Marcus was running for the Roman consulship in the latter days of the Roman Republic, and Quintus evidently figured his brother was too principled, too unschooled in the devious ways of politics, to make a winning race. Hence while his blunt handbook was dedicated to Marcus Cicero (just as Machiavelli later dedicated his similar handbook on politics, *The Prince*, to Lorenzo de Medici of Florence), its how-to message seems timeless— relevant to machine politicians today, some 2,000 years later—as well as conducive to corruption.

Look, said Quintus to his brother: As a senator and leading attorney, with many successful cases to your credit, remind your clients of your brilliant services and collect your political I.O.U.'s. Too, since citizens in outlying districts also vote, best swing around the circuit, greet your rural constituents, wish them happiness, caring families, long lives, good health, good crops, and, of course, urge them to vote.

And, of course, with urban citizens as well, kiss babies, embrace old ladies, smile in public, shake hands, slap backs, tell stories, and, above all (or underneath all), gather votes—the politician's *raison d'être*. Tell the citizens, in the city and in the outlying regions, that they are the salt of the earth, the strength of the country, God's chosen people. Tell them anything.

Let them personally know, Marcus, how highly you admire them and value their counsel, their friendship, their affection—and their vote. That is, fawn on the voters, butter them up, play the game. As Quintus wrote for his brother, as quoted by Haskell: "One has great need of a flattering manner, which, wrong and discreditable though it may be in other walks of life, is indispensable in seeking office."

Another thing, Quintus went on, don't be overly conscientious or careful in your electioneering. Be generous, even lavish, with pledges of booty, bounty, jobs, contracts, public works—of favors you can bestow once in office. "Human nature being what it is, all men prefer a false promise to a flat refusal. At the worst the man to whom you have lied may be angry. That risk, if you make a promise, is uncertain and deferred, and it affects only a few. But if you refuse you are sure to offend many, and that at once."

Quintus covered all the angles. He wrote: Again, dear Brother Marcus, no need to be reserved or above questioning the honesty and integrity of your opposition. Your rivals for office are certain to resort to bribery and other underhanded tricks. Right? Hence fight fire with fire, Quintus counseled. Try bribery yourself, buy off your enemies, convert them into allies. Too, why not try scandal? "Contrive, if possible," said Quintus, "to get some new scandal started against your rivals for crime or immorality or corruption, according to their characters."

This last idea struck home. Catiline, the key rival of Marcus Cicero in the election, was apparently making illicit payments to voters and key officials. But in Senate speeches Cicero went beyond such peccadilloes and accused Catiline of crime after crime, outrage after outrage, including murder, adultery, attempted massacre, attempted incest, and marriage to a daughter whom he had

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"Sure, I've been bribed—but it's probably with my own tax payments."

fathered with a mistress. Demanded Cicero: "*Quo usque, Catilina, abutere patientia nostra*? [How long, Catiline, will you abuse our patience?]" The accusations, however wild, fell on receptive ears. Catiline lost the election.

The More Things Change . . .

Now, what was really going on here two millennia ago of relevance to us in our own age of political corruption and rather unlimited government? Consider. Cicero's election campaign was all part of a universal game that goes to this hour, a bidding war, a slander war between rival parties and candidates, with each party and candidate trying to outpromise and out-denigrate the other, while the wooed and all-too-frequently-grasping voters swoon over the adoration and public loot showered or to be showered on them.

Historically parties and candidates have long resorted to a campaign strategy of half-truths if not calculated deceptions, artifices, illusions, and other stratagems that many voters, then and now, only half understand and half suspect of hoodwinkery. But many if not most of the electorate are nonetheless tantalized and corrupted by an election campaign—political gladiators skewering the reputations of their opponents, the temptation of something for nothing, the longing for certainty in an uncertain existence, the wish for security in an insecure world. Many a voter echoes the thought of Oscar Wilde: "I can resist everything except temptation."

So today's campaign tantalizers and tantalizees are part and parcel of the story of corruption. They are not basically different from political contests of yesteryear. Fanfare and knowing winks persist, accompanied by standard political charisma and oratorical flair, by cascades of rhetoric and bombast, by political conventions complete with campaign buttons, ribbons, flags, bunting, and balloons, by parades of marching bands and shiny open cars topped off with the smiling candidates waving at adoring multitudes along a parade route.

All this classic showmanship is at once benumbing and mesmerizing, if not confusing, to the elec-

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torate. But it is also, on the whole, enthralling, persuasive, and enveloping. As are the political slogans: "Carthage Must Be Destroyed." "A Chicken in Every Pot." "Death to the Huns." "Reunite the Two Germanies." "Peace and Prosperity." "Veni, Vidi, Vici." "Workers of the World, Unite." "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too." "A New Deal." "The Square Deal." "The New Freedom." "The European Community." "The Worker's Paradise." "A New Beginning." "Greater Asia's Co-Prosperity Sphere."

For then in the time of Cicero and now on the eve of a millennium, do candidates tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth? Do the voters themselves really believe all that campaign rhetoric and bombast? Many, perhaps most, obviously do. But quite a few of them nudge each other in the ribs and wink an eye. As Haskell commented on the electioneering goings-on in Ancient Rome: "Probably Cicero would have been surprised to know that his election charges [against Catiline] would be taken seriously by posterity."

Haskell concluded his book with an appendix of interventions, of campaign promises, and ploys that went wrong. He called it a "Chronology of Roman New Deal Measures and Other Economic Experiments." Some highlights:

367 B.C.—Licinius Stolo: moratorium on debts.

357 B.C.—Maximum interest rate set at $8^1/_3$ percent.

342 B.C.—Interest abolished to favor debtors; law soon ignored.

217 B.C.—Monetary devaluation to meet financial stringency in second war with Carthage.

133-121 B.C.—The Gracchi: Resettlement Administration; Public Works Administration; Ever-Normal Granary; two-price system for wheat, sold by the government at 32 cents a bushel (1939 equivalent), well below the market price, to those willing to stand in line.

58 B.C.—Wheat furnished free as a dole.

49-44 B.C.—Julius Caesar: panic in Rome when Caesar crosses Rubicon; flight of capital; collapse in real estate. Remedies: debts scaled down on basis of prewar values; Resettlement Administration, 80,000 taken off relief and settled away from Rome; relief rolls cut in half with means test (320,000 to 150,000); anti-hoarding measures, with compulsory investment in Italian land; Public Works Administration, work on roads, public buildings, reclamation projects.

29-9 B.C.—Augustus: more extensive Public Works Administration projects; large soldier bonuses; easy-money policy from spoils of Egypt and large coinage of gold and silver from government mines; rising prices; relief rolls, which had expanded after Julius Caesar's death, cut from 320,000 to 200,000.

91 A.D.—Domitian: Agricultural Adjustment Administration, half of provincial vineyards destroyed to stop overproduction of wine.

97-106 A.D.—Nerva and Trajan: Farm Credit Administration, with loans to farmers at half the market rate; government aid to children of poor families; senators required to invest one-third of their wealth in Italian land.

117-211 A.D.—Hadrian and successors: extravagant spending on public works by central government and cities, followed later by heavy expenditures for wars, exhausting both reserves and tax resources.

212-273 A.D.—Heavy taxation and inflation, demoralization of business, breakdown of the middle class.

274 A.D.—Aurelian: relief extended, with bread substituted for wheat and addition of free pork, olive oil, and salt; right to relief made hereditary. Ruinous taxes; galloping inflation.

284-476 A.D.—Diocletian and successors: spiraling taxation; inflation from overvalued currency with skyrocketing prices; Diocletian's ill-fated edict of 301 A.D. mandating wage and price controls under pain of death; totalitarian state; collapse of agricultural production; invasion of Germanic tribes; relocation of capital; end of Western Empire.

The push of Roman intervention and corruption is matched by the surge of Roman inflation. And that surge is reflected in the decline of silver content in the Roman coin of circulation, the *denarius*, from practically pure silver (save for a hardening agent) in the rule of Augustus (44 B.C.-14 A.D.) to practically pure copper (with just a wash of silver) by the rule of Diocletian (284-305 A.D.)

Quod Erat Demonstrandum: Majoritarianism, interventionism, corruption. As simple as one, two, three. Majoritarianism and interventionism make up the taproots of corruption. □

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"Socialism Works"

by Evelyn Pyburn

Hidden in the half-light of a seldom-seen nook, "Socialism Works" is scrawled across the cold concrete girders of an overpass in Missoula, Montana.

Considering the untold misery and suffering socialism has brought to so many people around the world, the statement seems appropriately placed.

Considering the glaring contradiction of Eastern Europe, it's almost inconceivable that the words were written at all; but then, that would be to underestimate the undaunted perseverance of those who believe that their fantasies can supersede reality—of those who believe that it is possible and just to live off the production of others.

"Socialism Works." For the sake of accuracy, the statement needs a substatement that would in essence say, "*but only as long as it has a capitalistic base to suck dry*"—for it is only the remnants of a capitalistic free market, depleted as it is, that sustain the ever-growing and expanding socialism of the United States. And, as much as freedom lovers might wish to the contrary, the events of Eastern Europe have been brought about, not so much by an intellectual revolution, as by the final draining of the lifeblood of what was the productive sector of those economies.

From all the rhetoric one hears about establishing—not freedom or capitalism—but a "mixed economy," and with all the pleading for foreign aid, it's obvious that the upheaval in Eastern Europe has primarily to do with the shedding of a used and wasted host and the casting about for a more vibrant, living one to which the socialists can once again attach themselves.

Evelyn Pyburn is editor of the Big Sky Business Journal *in Billings, Montana, where an earlier version of this article first appeared.*

A mixed economy is nothing more than a variant strain of socialism having grudgingly acknowledged its dependence upon the producers it condemns. A mixed economy—in any country—must, by its very nature, slide inexorably toward the same end as Eastern Europe. Those who advocate it are only asking to repeat the "grand experiment." They have no interest in freedom, and their avowed love of humanity is false.

Of course, there are those who recognize the root cause of the failure of the grand experiment that wasted the lives of a whole generation of Eastern Europeans, but they are not the "leaders" who are redesigning the future or being quoted by mainstream media—not in those countries and not in this country.

For freedom lovers the events of Eastern Europe are indeed a victory—a victory of truth, of reality, of facts—but it is not a victory of convincing people who don't recognize facts, who believe that reality is but what they wish, so long as they control the necessary political powers to force other people to do their bidding.

In all its barbarity, socialism is still the dream for the East German woman who on television said that, yes, she wants jobs and food and clothing, but she sees no reason to give up free day care. She doesn't see that having forcibly expropriated the resources from those who produced them to fund free day care (and social programs *ad infinitum*) is essentially the reason she and everyone else must do without jobs, food, and clothing.

In explaining such attitudes, a friend once said that people can think in such a way because they don't believe that actions have consequences. Thus they can allow themselves to look at the events of Eastern Europe and fail to understand their meaning—they do not see the events as a consequence of their ideas in action. It allows them to look at a failed socialistic program, lay the blame upon capitalism, and beg for more of the same.

It allows them to witness the events of Eastern Europe and go right on advocating free day care, free housing, socialized medicine, socialized education, guaranteed incomes, and regulated industry in the United States—because they don't believe that actions have consequences. For them, "Socialism Works" because they say it does. □

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Affirmative Action: The New Road to Serfdom

by Steven Yates

1. INTRODUCTION

For over 20 years, policies calling for "affirmative action" for women and minorities have been part of American political life, and a source of enormous controversy. Advocates say the policies are morally justified, and necessary for the continued advancement of women and minorities in a society long characterized by racial prejudice and gender bias.

In this article I wish to examine this issue anew. Do the claims made on behalf of affirmative action hold up? How much substance is there to the charge that "affirmative action" is a euphemism for reverse discrimination? Moreover, has affirmative action benefited women and minorities in the ways originally intended, or have such policies worked to their detriment in some respects, as well as to the detriment of our organizations? Finally, to what extent is affirmative action compatible with the principles of a free and open society?

There are two aspects to the issue. *First*, many philosophers, legal scholars, and others have tried to defend affirmative action goals and policies on moral grounds alone. I will argue that these defenses as well as the responses to the reverse discrimination charge rest on dubious assumptions, and that sometimes these can be mined from the writings of its advocates themselves. But as it turns out, affirmative action has remained mostly untouched by such failures. *Second*, affirmative action and related policies like forced busing to achieve "racial balance" in public schools have usually been imposed not as a result of intellectual arguments but through political force (or threat of force), from the upper echelons of government downward, usually through the courts. It is in this sense that affirmative action is a serious threat to a free society.

In the second and third sections, I will review the major arguments. I believe it is important to see where they fail and why. It is also important to understand how affirmative action fails in practice—how it harms its intended beneficiaries in a number of ways. In the fourth section I will turn to the political agenda and show how this was laid in place not as a result of public consensus but through top-down legislation and semantic subterfuge, including what amounts to an official taboo on criticism of what has become an orthodoxy. Finally, in the fifth section, I will argue that affirmative action is actually a species of social engineering, carried out in accordance with a general view of human beings. Accordingly, I will criticize both the assumptions and methods of social engineering as opposed to what I will call the philosophy of social spontaneity, which regards individuals as owners of their own lives and supreme in their own sphere of influence. Only the latter, I conclude, is compatible with a free society.

I do not claim to make a comprehensive statement here.[1] It would be impossible to summarize

Dr. Yates is a professor of philosophy at Auburn University.

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concisely all the literature this issue has triggered in the past two decades. However, my aim here is to deal not with details but fundamentals. The implicit reference to F. A. Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* in my title is deliberate; for I will argue that affirmative action programs, far from leading to a more just society, are a major means by which a well-entrenched collectivism, the core of the social engineer's philosophy, long institutionalized in the legislative and judicial branches of our government and in the universities, is taking us rapidly down the road Hayek has spent his career warning us against.

2. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: THE MORAL DEBATE

The starting point of the claim that affirmative action is morally justified is clear enough. Our society does have a legacy of discrimination against blacks, other minorities, and women, arbitrarily keeping them out of jobs, restaurants, and good schools, while concentrating power and influence in the hands of white males of European descent. As a result, many members of these groups are educationally and economically well behind white males and show few signs of catching up. Affirmative action's proponents conclude from this that today society has obligations to these groups by offering them special advantages not available to white males. Or to make the point another way, *preferential treatment* of minorities and women is called for, and morally justified.

Arguments defending preferential treatment diverge at this point. Some are *backward looking* in the sense that their point of reference is the legacy of discrimination itself. What may be called the *argument from compensatory justice* holds that because blacks, women, and others were discriminated against in the past and excluded from full participation in the economic life of American society, reparation is owed these groups today. The way to make reparation includes offering them preferential treatment. This, we are told, will "balance the books."

But what of the fact that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 explicitly repudiates preferential treatment?

Advocates of this backward-looking approach to affirmative action reply as follows: Simple nondiscrimination is not enough. First, socially inculcated biases, which are the legacy of generations, are difficult to eradicate and may not even be recognized as such by the perpetrators. Second, most members of past-victimized groups are still far behind most white males in their ability to compete for educational and employment opportunities. Hence even though blacks (to take the most obvious example) are no longer *direct* victims of legally sanctioned discrimination today, their descendents are nevertheless *indirect* victims.[2]

This is sometimes called the *shackled-runner* argument, in the sense that these "runners" cannot compete effectively today because of "shackles" placed on them by their heritage. Since their immediate ancestors suffered direct discrimination while the white males of the time did not, they were born with disadvantages mostly nonexistent in the dominant white culture. According to the shackled-runner argument, the fact that today's white males did not do the "shackling" does not affect the fact that they were born in an environment free from a history of discrimination, thus suggesting a justification for preferences even if they sometimes lead to a more qualified white male being passed over for a job or promotion. Backward-looking arguments, then, see compensation as a means to justice, and mandate reparation in the form of preferential treatment of members of past-disadvantaged groups as the primary means of compensation.

Forward-looking arguments have as their reference point not past discrimination per se but rather a certain kind of society that presumably would have existed had there been no past discrimination or oppression. In this society the educational, political, and economic influence of all social groups would have been roughly equal, with no one group dominant. We may call this the *argument from social justice.*

The Moral Mandate

For advocates of this position, the moral mandate is not so much to make reparation but rather to increase the strength of these groups to the point where all have equal access to educational facilities and positions of power, and are represented in the work force in proportion to their percentage in the population. Affirmative action programs are then justified on the grounds that they help fulfill these demands of social justice, and

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again this holds even when they occasionally result in the selection of a woman or minority job applicant (or candidate for admission to a college or university program) over a white male with superior paper credentials; for it is reasonable that the group which has long been unjustifiably dominant be expected to make the sacrifices.

But wouldn't this last be detrimental to organizations? Not necessarily, it is asserted; it might even be to their advantage. For the larger and more diverse the applicant pool for a desirable position, the more potential talent to draw on and the greater the likelihood of a firm or university being able to hire first-rate employees or faculty members. With regard to universities in particular, long at the center of affirmative action-related controversies, the diversity achieved through preferential faculty hiring and admissions policies should help further one of the aims of the university: the quest to uncover and communicate knowledge, which (given that "knowledge" is no longer something over which white males of European descent can claim a monopoly) should rightly include perspectives that can be had only from incorporating diverse points of view into the curriculum.

Furthermore, black faculty members can serve as role models for black students, representing examples of black success; in this sense, being black can be considered by itself a bona fide qualification for a certain kind of university position. Consequently, it is maintained, preferential treatment of women and minority groups is practical as well as on solid ground morally.

This completes what is, I believe, a fair statement of the most important arguments of those favoring preferential treatment. Despite their long-standing support in the academic world and endorsement by the courts, there are good reasons for denying that they succeed. Let us consider some criticisms.

3. THE FAILURE OF MORAL ARGUMENTS

The major complaint against preferential policies is that they inevitably lead to reverse discrimination against young white males and hence only perpetuate the very sort of injustice they purport to redress; let us call this the *reverse discrimination counter-argument*. Justice, in this view, requires equal treatment under the law for all citizens. Preferential treatment violates this by going beyond the original, carefully worded provisions in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; in practice it violates rather than helps bring about equality of opportunity. Thomas Sowell expresses this as follows: "'Equal opportunity' laws and policies require that individuals be judged on their qualifications as individuals *without regard* to race, sex, age, etc. 'Affirmative action' requires that they be judged *with regard* to such group membership, receiving preferential or compensatory treatment in some cases to achieve a more proportional 'representation' in various institutions and occupations."[3]

Philosopher Thomas Nagel, a long-time defender of preferences, readily concedes that preferential treatment "is a departure from the ideal—one of the values finally recognized in our society is that people should be judged so far as possible on the basis of individual characteristics rather than involuntary group membership."[4] Nagel therefore recommends the practice as a temporary measure to be abandoned once its goal of increasing the strength of previously disadvantaged groups is achieved. Nagel maintains that this goal outweighs the complaints of white males who occasionally lose out.

Considerations suggested by the shackled-runner argument indicate, contrary to Sowell, that preferential treatment does not run counter to equal opportunity but is actually a necessary condition for it. What ultimately justifies preferential treatment in the present, continues Nagel, is that it "further[s] a social goal of the first importance," that of the removal of the race- and gender-based caste system that prevailed in the United States prior to the Civil Rights era and which still persists in muted form. According to Nagel, despite the seeming "element of individual unfairness" present, preferential treatment programs do not involve the sense of racially based contempt or gender-based superiority that characterized discrimination in the past; rather, they flow from the mandate of "increasing the social and economic strength of formerly victimized groups."[5]

Will this kind of reply do? There are several reasons for thinking not, and many of Nagel's own remarks indicate serious problems with the

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response to the reverse discrimination counter-argument as well as related problems.

Saddling the Beneficiaries

It is often taken for granted that affirmative action has benefited blacks and women in particular, and is said to be needed for other groups as well (e.g., the elderly and the handicapped). But in fact it saddles its alleged beneficiaries with the stigma of having obtained a position not by virtue of abilities or qualifications but because of involuntary group membership.

This can have two immediate adverse results. First, co-workers are apt to regard those workers with a certain amount of skepticism that wouldn't have been there had merit been the major criterion in hiring. This will be all the more so in universities: will a person be in a position to serve as a good "role model" if his students suspect that the only reason for his being there is affirmative action? Second, alleged beneficiaries might come to regard *themselves* with suspicion and lose self-confidence. Nagel summarizes: "Even those who would have made it anyway fall under suspicion, from themselves and from others: it comes to be widely felt that success does not mean the same thing for women and minorities."

In recent years this situation has become much worse. The rise of racial tensions throughout American society and particularly on college campuses during the past several years has been the subject of intense scrutiny. Most observers take the line that such tensions are a by-product of Reagan-era conservative politics which, they allege, were hostile (or, at best, indifferent) to the interests of minorities. They add that racial disturbances on campuses, including "hate speech" and even violence by white students aimed at black students, indicate a residuum of racism that the civil rights movement has so far failed to eradicate. But if one listens to what is being said by the more politically astute of the white students, it becomes clear that their target is not minorities but the preferential treatment of minorities. They see themselves as now being at a semi-permanent disadvantage, and resent the politicizing of universities.

The point is, preferential treatment invariably favors members of some groups at the expense of members of others, and this can hardly help but produce resentment and hostility among those sacrificed. At least some of the hostility will be aimed at the favored groups. Of course, this is inappropriate: the appropriate target is a policy, not individuals; but most white male victims of preferential policies are not philosophers or policy analysts and will therefore choose the most convenient scapegoat. In this sense, then, too, the policy indirectly brings harm to its intended beneficiaries.

Additional difficulties cast even more doubt on the ability of preferential treatment programs to achieve their stated goals. Nagel notes that in practice "no effort is made to give preference to those who have suffered most from discrimination...."[6] This suggests fatal objections to the shackled-runner argument. Let us assume for the moment that a legacy of racial discrimination is impossible to overcome without preferences. Some runners, then, will be more shackled than others by this legacy, with many not being helped by even the most far-reaching programs.

Who Benefits?

But preferential treatment cannot help blacks who don't have the qualifications even to be considered for a desirable position or college admission. It is more likely to work in favor of those who both happen to be in the right place at the right time and whose qualifications seem to be at least marginal. Consequently, preferential treatment works most in favor of those least handicapped by past discrimination and benefits little, if at all, those presumably most handicapped.

A parallel situation exists for white males. White males who are financially very well off—who we may assume for the sake of argument are the main beneficiaries of past discrimination—can often obtain jobs and promotions through connections and thus circumvent affirmative action policies. On the other hand, white males who themselves come from impoverished or lower-class backgrounds are often in no position to benefit from preferential policies of any kind. Furthermore, these men are usually the ones to be sacrificed since they have minimal resources to fight back.

Finally, "runners" from various ethnic groups can be "shackled" for a variety of reasons, many not involving racial discrimination. Recent emigres from Korea and Vietnam have arrived in the United States unable to speak English and with no possessions other than what they had on their

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backs. They might well claim to have worn far heavier "shackles," but have succeeded in American society nevertheless. Thomas Sowell has argued persuasively that even institutionalized discrimination need not be a barrier to the advancement of members of groups who are sufficiently resourceful.[7]

These considerations all help point the way to a major objection to the moral defenses of affirmative action: their main emphasis is on *groups* or group identity instead of on *individuals* and individual merit. In the world of affirmative action, an individual is not an autonomous agent in his or her own right but a member of a group for classification. Indeed, groups are often seen as moral entities, agents, or victims of morally reprehensible acts by other groups. Thus blacks as a group or women as a group are often deemed victims of discrimination; white males as group are deemed responsible and forced to make restitution.

This point is admittedly not new,[8] but in my view its strength has never been appreciated. Affirmative action seems inevitably to benefit individuals who typically are not the ones who have suffered the worst forms or even significant amounts of racial or sexual discrimination, and the white males sacrificed are typically too young or economically vulnerable to have had any role in instituting or perpetuating discriminatory practices or to have benefited from them. That there is something seriously wrong with this reification of groups should be evident by noting that despite claims that reparation is owed to groups (e.g., blacks) because the groups were wronged by past acts of discrimination, reparation can only be made to the groups by providing recompense to individual members, with the only criterion frequently being that those receiving the reparation happened to be in the right place at the time.

This brings us to the crux of the issue: do moral categories (rights, obligations, and so on) apply at all to involuntary and mostly unstructured human collectives such as races, genders, and age brackets? Such entities aren't capable of sensation or consciousness. They do not think or act. In other words, they are not agents, where an *agent* is understood as an entity that can set goals, direct its own actions, or be harmed by the actions of others. So if a capacity to act or be acted on is a necessary condition for moral attributes, then the claim that certain groups owe, or are owed, reparation for past wrongs is unintelligible.

Moral wrongs can be committed only by individuals, and only individuals can be owed reparation for acts committed against them. Given this, we need only add the obvious fact that both the worst perpetrators of racial discrimination in the past and their most maligned victims are no longer alive either to make reparation or to receive such recompense; it is no more just to make today's white males pay reparation than it would be to penalize this year's incoming freshman class for acts committed by last year's graduated seniors. This, I submit, is the main basis of the charge that affirmative action amounts to unjust reverse discrimination against white males.

Some would reply that this doesn't touch the argument from social justice, which doesn't rely on the notion of reparation. But nonetheless this forward-looking argument does depend on the idea of increasing the economic strength of members of groups by virtue of group identity; it still, therefore, treats groups as prior to individuals for the purpose of moral evaluation, making the same mistake as the backward-looking argument.

The Pseudo-Concept of Social Justice

To my mind the idea of "social justice" was shown to be a pseudo-concept by philosopher and libertarian theorist John Hospers. Hospers, following Aristotle, argues that *justice* is directly connected with *desert*; it involves individuals treating other individuals as they deserve, based on their actions. Justice requires, then, that hiring and promotion be done on the basis of individual merit and qualification rather than group membership and entitlement. In this case, "social justice" in practice leads not to justice but to its opposite.[9]

The advocates of "social justice" maintain that the economic strength of members of certain groups ought to be increased. In practice, this can only involve a redistribution of wealth and jobs from those most deserving of them based on qualifications as measured by past performance, to those who are not.

This assumes, of course, another direct connection between being the most qualified for a position and deserving to be hired for it. The theorists of "social justice" have worked mightily to try to break this connection.[10] Usually this involves

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pointing out that no one *deserves* to be born with a certain ability. However, it is not so much the having of abilities but what one does with them. It is not abilities as such that lead to desert but rather the volitional, willful exercise of one's abilities; ability without action produces nothing. Some theorists of "social justice" have bemoaned the fact that some people seem to be born with more intelligence and ability than others. But how could matters be otherwise? And does it follow that those born with more intelligence and ability deserve to be penalized for it?

It should be clear by this point that the argument from social justice depends on an essentially egalitarian view of the human condition, and connects justice with equality, involving entitlements, instead of desert. Though I will defer further discussion of egalitarianism to section 5, it seems pertinent to note at this point that in practice egalitarianism can only lead to what amounts to penalizing the more meritorious while rewarding the less meritorious, given that justice as equality leads to group entitlements instead of reward for the exercise of individual ability; at the very least, no one receives just deserts.[11] Thus "social justice" leads not to genuine justice but to injustice, and we may safely conclude that the argument from social justice fails.

4. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLITICS: A HISTORY OF COERCION AND INTIMIDATION

The failure of the moral arguments has mattered little to those involved in one way or another in implementing the affirmative action agenda, and a close look at the reasons for this will bring us to the main theme of this article. First of all, the language of this agenda has been vague and equivocal from the outset. Legislators, judges, and bureaucrats have therefore been free to engage in semantic manipulations worthy of an Orwell villain. Secondly, critics of the agenda have often found themselves charged with being racists or of defending a "racist status quo" (even though one of affirmative action's severest critics, Thomas Sowell, is black). Finally, white males alleging reverse discrimination have found that the courts are almost totally indifferent to them; the very existence of reverse discrimination is sometimes denied.

Let us take these in order. The first appearance of the term *affirmative action* was in President Kennedy's Executive Order 10925, where organizations were ordered to "take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed, and that employees are treated during employment, without regard to their race, color, religion, sex, or national origin." Lyndon Johnson's better known Executive Order 11246 simply repeated this passage almost word for word. Nowhere in either document was *affirmative action* defined; no policy was delineated; how to "take affirmative action" was not spelled out.

Two possible interpretations surfaced. Either the legislation called for simple nondiscrimination; or, contrary to the original wording of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, it called for race and gender preferences. Early warning signs that the second interpretation would triumph appeared in 1968 when the Department of Labor expanded on the meaning of *affirmative action* as designating a specific policy for the first time:

> A necessary prerequisite to the development of a satisfactory affirmative action program is the identification and analysis of problem areas inherent in minority employment and an evaluation of opportunities for utilization of minority group personnel. The contractor's program shall provide in detail for specific steps to guarantee equal employment of members of minority groups, including, when there are deficiencies, the development of specific goals and time-tables for the prompt achievement of full and equal employment opportunity.[12]

Let us focus on *equal employment opportunity* and *deficiency* (later called *underutilization*). Ensuing guidelines dated February 5, 1970, made it increasingly clear that *equal employment opportunity* was being redefined as *result*:

> An affirmative action program is a set of specific and *result-oriented* procedures to which a contractor commits himself to apply every good faith. *The objective of these procedures plus such efforts is equal employment opportunity.* Procedures without effort to make them work are meaningless; and effort, undirected by specific and meaningful procedures, is inadequate. (emphases mine)

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The next set of guidelines, dated December 4, 1971, indicated that *underutilization* was to be redefined as lack of *proportional representation*:

> An acceptable affirmative action program must include an analysis of areas within which the contractor is deficient in the utilization of minority groups and women, and further, goals and timetables to which the contractor's good faith efforts must be directed to correct the deficiencies and, thus to increase materially the utilization of minorities and women, at all levels and in all segments of his work force where deficiencies exist. . . . [The employer must take] an analysis of all major classifications at the facility, with explanations if minorities or women are currently being underutilized in any one or more job classifications. . . . *"Underutilization" is defined as having fewer minorities or women in a particular job classification than would reasonably be expected by their availability. . . .* (emphasis mine)

In other words, in the guise of providing "equal opportunity," employers now found themselves forced to keep extensive records on the race, and sex, of every employee and every applicant for every position. If there was an imbalance between, say, the percentage of blacks at a particular firm and their presumed availability in the population, a presumption of discrimination was virtually automatic.

Legislators have avoided the unpopular term *quota* like the plague; but it should be clear that what they were mandating was impossible without something like a quota system. The merit system was almost universally subject to legal challenge, since any employee test attempting to specify objective criteria for what counts as merit in job performance at which blacks passed at a lower rate than whites for whatever reason would be taken as *prima facie* evidence of the discriminatory nature of the test. Even literacy tests were challenged under these guidelines. (One thinks of today's embattled SAT.)

This was all in place by the early 1970s, and resulted in the largest restructuring of government policy toward business and education in American history. Federal bureaucracies mushroomed and their intrusion into the marketplace and control over society at large increased. This restructuring was not accomplished without a certain amount of resistance, both from intellectual critics of affirmative action (e.g., Nathan Glazer and Thomas Sowell, among others) and from the public which has all along passively resisted quota-hiring and forced busing.

But by and large, critics of affirmative action have faced a stone wall similar to that of white males bringing reverse discrimination lawsuits. In his recent study, *Invisible Victims: White Males and the Crisis of Affirmative Action*, Sociologist Frederick R. Lynch documents how affirmative action has been protected from serious criticism in the universities, throughout the federal government, and even in the business community, by a system of informal but nonetheless rigidly enforced taboos, a state of affairs he calls the New McCarthyism.[13]

The New McCarthyism

The New McCarthyism has bred intense pressures not to criticize what has become a received orthodoxy—whether defended with arguments of the sort examined above or simply imposed by force. Critics of affirmative action thus frequently find themselves attacked *ad hominem*. At worst, they are accused of being closet racists and/or sexists. At best, ensuing discussion is diverted from issues and arguments to the presumed ulterior motives of the critics.

This is the case even in the universities, which are staffed by people who in their own areas of expertise would never tolerate this sort of thing. Consider academic philosophy for a moment. Academic philosophers are usually scrupulously careful in their use of language and critical of anyone who isn't. Their training should equip them to detect improper uses of terms and expressions. They can usually spot poor arguments. But "mainstream" academic philosophers have rarely criticized the language of affirmative action legislation—even those specializing in legal reasoning and the philosophy of law, who as it turns out usually support the standard legal impositions.

What emerges from both this and the previous section should be deeply disturbing to all supporters of an open society and a free market. The New McCarthyism has to a large extent prevented open, critical discussion of affirmative action in the universities while allowing the policy to run unchecked, often permitting the hiring of

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marginally qualified people to tenurable faculty jobs. And, generally, the means by which affirmative action has been implemented run completely counter to principles in which citizens compete for desirable positions (where what is desirable differs from citizen to citizen and from organization to organization) and in which employers are free to hire on merit and on the basis of their needs rather than according to criteria dictated from the outside.

Affirmative action, we conclude, is simply incompatible with freedom, whether intellectual or economic, and incompatible with the idea of equal treatment for all citizens under the law. In the next section we will consider some deeply entrenched presumptions of affirmative action which help explain its enormous intellectual appeal.

5. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AS SOCIAL ENGINEERING

Let us summarize our results so far: (1) All arguments attempting to justify affirmative action fail; (2) the affirmative action agenda has nevertheless been implemented by force (or threat of force), often using verbal subterfuge intended to disguise the coercive element as much as possible. These results suggest that affirmative action is a rather different kind of policy from that envisioned by its well-intentioned intellectual advocates and even by the original architects of the civil rights movement who were agitating for genuine equal opportunity.

Social engineering involves a fairly definite set of commitments and methods, and I submit that we have been looking at a textbook example. The philosophy of social engineering is committed to (1) *collectivism*, understood as the "deliberate organization of the labors of society for a definite social goal,"[14] as a result of which individuals are regarded as subordinate to larger social units including society as a whole, which as we saw above is the case with affirmative action; (2) *social determinism*, which holds that individuals are essentially the products of social and class environments and hence in the last analysis are pawns of forces they are incapable of transcending on their own, a conviction which has allowed "victimology" to become a major growth industry; (3) *egalitarianism*, the doctrine that equality of condition is both a possible and morally desirable state of affairs; and (4) *elitism*, the view that a special group of individuals, usually intellectuals, alone has the knowledge and methods needed to construct a planned social order. I will argue that the position which results from these commitments is ultimately incoherent.[15]

Collectivism goes back at least as far as Plato, who saw individuals as imperfect copies of a universal Form: Man. In Plato's view, the differences which existed among individuals were accidental; what mattered was what all had in common. In the last analysis, Plato's vision in the *Republic* was of a utopia in which the interests of individuals were entirely subordinate to those of the whole. While other conceptions of the relationship between the individual and society certainly came out of that milieu, it is fair to say that Plato's vision has exercised a stronger hold on the political mind than that of any other thinker— it was not without reason that Alfred North Whitehead could refer to the history of Western philosophy as a "series of footnotes to Plato."

In more recent times, collectivism has drawn impetus from doctrines such as Rousseau's "general will" and Hegel's "organic" conception of the state. What it required to achieve its modern form was the application of the mechanistic view of the universe to human beings, leading to the rise of a determinism holding that necessary and sufficient conditions could be specified for every human action (the preferred term became *behavior*). Marx integrated Hegel's views with determinism and arrived at the materialist conception of history which reduced individual thought, consciousness, and hence motive and action, to class interest. While it would be unfair to accuse our modern social engineers of being full-fledged Marxists, most work from similar determinist premises, which deny that individuals are capable of autonomous action and maintain that they are products of their immediate social environment. The social engineer's philosophy depends crucially on the view that individuals are products of their environment and therefore malleable in the sense that a redesigned environment will produce a different kind of human being.

What kind of human being—and society—does the social engineer want to produce? The guiding

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ethic of the affirmative action agenda seems to be that equality of condition is the most natural and morally desirable state of affairs. Inequalities, where they exist, are to be carefully scrutinized and, if lacking justification, to be minimized through state action redistributing wealth and power aimed at maximizing equality of condition. This justifies measuring equality of opportunity by equality of results, and when the latter is lacking to infer that the former must be lacking as well. Proportional representation and "racial balance" become the only allowable states of affairs, in schools at all levels, in businesses (including business boardrooms), and throughout society at large.

Finally, there is the most basic tenet of the social engineer's world view: that there is a cadre of intellectuals with the necessary knowledge and tools to engage in successful economic planning of this sort on a large scale. This cadre understands human nature, race relations, and socio-economic interaction sufficiently well to produce the blueprint for a new social order in which men and women of different races will all exist and intermingle in harmony.

This, then, is the world view in which affirmative action is most at home. To what extent is it credible?

Collectivism, as we saw earlier, begins to falter on the notion that the groups it reifies are not conscious or capable of sensation, cannot take any form of action, therefore, and (unlike other groups such as corporations) have no internal organization and did not originate from the conscious, volitional actions of their members. The reasons for preferring individualism to collectivism can perhaps be better understood with an analogy.

Consider social insects. Their nature (and evolutionary heritage) is sufficiently different from ours that a kind of collectivism might offer a good description of their interactions. It might make sense to say that a colony of bees is united by a kind of "group mind." But human beings are not social insects. No sense can be made of the view that a human society is governed by a "group mind." There are only individual minds which happen to share language, concepts, and customs, who can sometimes benefit from cooperative actions and at other times from competitive ones, depending on the context. Thus it is not what we have in common which counts in a social context, but rather our individual differences, those factors that make each of us unique beings. These differences, I submit, cannot be "engineered" out of us.

This requires that we see ourselves as beings who act rather than merely respond causally to stimuli; it requires that determinism be rejected. A careful look at the internal logic of determinism suggests additional problems. We have been speaking of actions, i.e., acts of volition or "free will." An argument for libertarianism in this sense can begin by noting that to the extent determinism is assumed true it applies to its own advocates and yields the result that their advocacy of determinism is itself a causal product. In logic we normally distinguish between the causes of our beliefs and the reasons which support them; such a distinction is necessary because causal processes don't aim at truth (or, for that matter, at anything else). Hence although the determinist may claim reasons for believing determinism, it should be clear that on his own terms some means of accounting for these reasons *as* reasons are barred, and justification for believing determinism superior to alternatives is lost. Rational deliberation and acceptance of a thesis is, by its very nature, volitional and hence free. So if we begin by assuming the truth of determinism, we reach the result that on its own terms there can be no rational grounds for believing determinism to be true.[16] While this may not constitute an absolute refutation of determinism, it certainly seems to render the position pointless.

Incoherent Social Policy

The self-applicability of determinism also yields incoherent results as social policy. If social determinism is true, then the social engineers of whatever stripe are as subject to determinants as anyone else. A successful social blueprint, though, would have to have succeeded at redesigning society as a whole, presupposing some means of access to or control over the determinants of everyone. Now either the social engineers can achieve control over the determinants of their own behavior or they cannot. The former would seem impossible on logical grounds alone; thus the social engineers must exclude themselves and their own activities from their plan. This latter option not only contradicts their starting assumptions, but if pushed far enough quickly takes on overtones of the kind of

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technocratic totalitarianism found in, say, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World.*

Indeed, the very existence of a technocratic elite of social engineers compromises the commitment to egalitarianism, in that there remains a dominant group—the elite. Any attempt to redistribute wealth and power presupposes the existence of at least one agent with the power to plan and carry out the redistribution, and this agent is necessarily "outside" the social order being acted upon. This suggests that egalitarianism is an impossible dream; even as a regulative ideal, it will inevitably tend to *concentrate* power in the hands of an elite, not *distribute* it evenly. As the previous section strongly suggests, the implementation of affirmative action has done just this; it has concentrated power in the hands of bureaucrats and Federal judges.

Finally, a more basic assumption animates the social engineer—the view that he alone has the knowledge to construct a blueprint that will better society. But real people are a diverse lot, with an enormous variety of interests, wants, needs, merits, and talents. Says Hayek on this point in a passage worth quoting at length:

> . . . it is impossible for any man to survey more than a limited field, to be aware of the urgency of more than a limited number of needs. Whether his interests center round his own physical needs, or whether he takes a warm interest in the welfare of every human being he knows, the ends about which he can be concerned will always be only an infinitesimal fraction of the needs of all men.
>
> This is the fundamental fact on which the whole philosophy of individualism is based. It does not assume, as is often asserted that man is egoistic or selfish or ought to be. It merely starts from the indisputable fact that the limits of our powers of imagination make it impossible to include in our scale of values more than a sector of the needs of the whole society. . . . From this the individualist concludes that the individuals should be allowed, within defined limits, to follow their own values and preferences rather than somebody else's; that within these spheres the individual's system of ends should be supreme and not subject to any dictation by others. It is this recognition of the individual as the ultimate judge of his ends, the belief that as far as possible his own views ought to govern his actions, that forms the essence of the individualist position.[17]

Discord Increases

From this we can see why collectivist policies such as affirmative action are doing more harm than good, even to their alleged beneficiaries, why instead of bringing "social justice" they are only increasing racial discord (and can clashes between feminists and anti-feminists be far behind?). People will allow themselves to be pushed around for only so long; then they will rebel in the name of self-determination, as the civil rights movement itself attests.

This explains, too, why egalitarian policies calling for redistribution of wealth and jobs invariably lead to economic impoverishment. When producers see the fruits of their labor taken from them by force, the incentive to produce disappears. Soon, as production declines, there is less and less wealth to redistribute. This has been the bane of every socialist society in history, and gives us a decisive argument against egalitarianism: when we're all coerced into economic equality (except for the elite, that is), we'll all be equally poor.

Finally, our institutions—especially educational ones—are rapidly showing the results of 20 years of coercive preferential policies (lowered standards and test scores, widespread illiteracy, and so on). Affirmative action and forced busing have already done extensive damage to the schools at all levels. And there are many occupations in which the lowering of standards, which demands for proportional representation inevitably cause, is actually dangerous. Consider an airline that takes demands for proportional representation literally. It will follow that because 15 percent of the population is black, 15 percent of all its pilots and air traffic controllers should be black. If qualifications are regarded as "undeserved" and merit hiring as "discriminatory" in cases like this, the resulting dangers to the public should be obvious.

Thus it is urgent that preferential treatment be rejected, and individualism and the spontaneity of the marketplace replace it. Admittedly this will be easier said than done; many careers ranging from academic to bureaucratic depend on the perpetuation of affirmative action whether or not it helps average women and minorities.

The best thing would be for more women and minorities to express skepticism toward the affirmative action agenda. Intellectual arguments favoring affirmative action for, say, blacks, come

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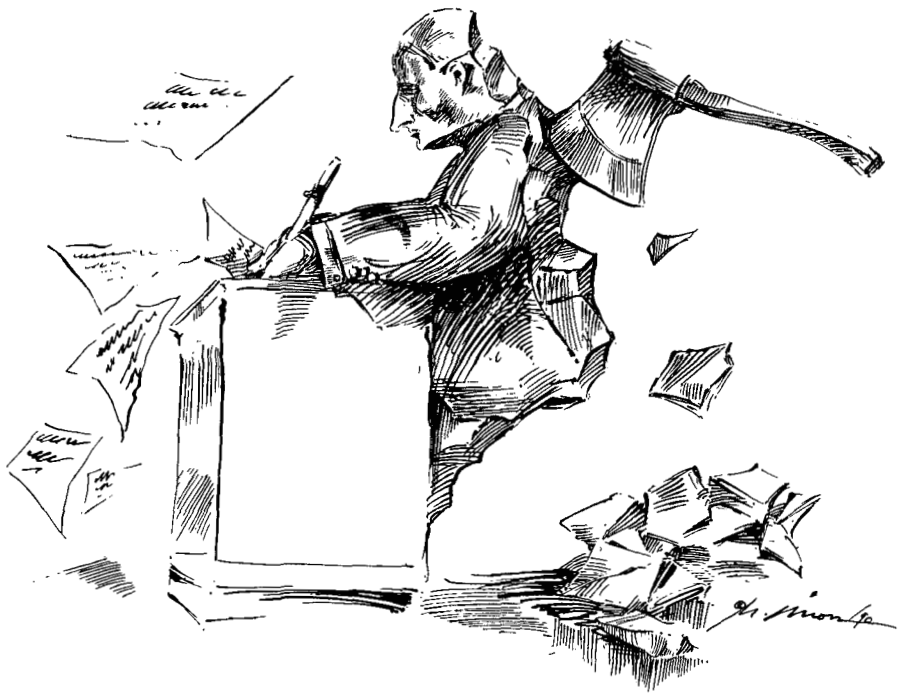

up as empty verbiage for the simple reason that no one knows enough about the situations of all blacks as individuals. Ultimately the conclusion is unavoidable that they, like everyone else, must stop waiting on ineffective statist policies, take matters into their own hands, and rise by their own efforts. It is encouraging to note that more and more blacks are doing just this. Poll after poll shows their growing suspicion of both white liberals and the black civil rights establishment, with the focal point of their distrust being affirmative action as having produced dependence instead of the sort of economic empowerment that can be had only by individual effort.

6. CONCLUSION: THE FATE OF RACISM IN A FREE SOCIETY

There are still plenty of writers who would respond to the conclusion of the last section with: *but you haven't once seriously addressed the problems of racism and racial discrimination that still exist in American society*! Indeed, one of the legacies of the far left has been the all-too-common view that American institutions are inherently racist, and that free-market capitalism itself helps foster and maintain racist institutions and attitudes. Response to these charges is called for. I will argue that they reflect a misunderstanding of how a free market works, and in particular, how racists will end up at a disadvantage when markets are permitted to function.

Consider two competing businesses operating under free market conditions; call them B and C. Let us assume that racism prevails at B, and that it has the following results: B refuses to hire black employees at any level other than for common labor (e.g., as janitors); it does not permit them to rise to positions of responsibility. Likewise, B doesn't have any black clientele; its board of directors doesn't carry on significant dealings with blacks. C, on the other hand, has instituted a policy of hiring on the basis of merit and of promotion as part of a uniform reward system. Thus a job applicant's race is considered irrelevant to his or her qualifications; as a result, C employs a number of qualified blacks who were unable to find jobs with B. Likewise, C obtains the black clients whom B

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turned away and does business with black enterprises B wouldn't deal with. In these admittedly hypothetical circumstances, it should be clear that B's racism is doing it enormous and perhaps irreparable harm, in that B is losing business to C. In a free market, C is in a position to outperform B; and if the board of directors at B refuses to change its policies, B may eventually face being forced out of business. To sum up, in a free society racist enterprises end up harming themselves more than the targets of their racism.

The Free Market vs. Racism

My thesis, therefore, is that a free market and racism are ultimately at odds with one another, and in a way surprisingly similar to how a free market and affirmative action are at odds with one another. Both give preferences to certain individuals at the expense of other individuals on grounds other than merit.

Under free-market conditions, a firm must seek to hire the best available employees. If it does not do so, it will lose them to competitors. It should not discriminate among its customers; a restaurant owner who refuses to serve blacks will only send them to the competition across the street and reduce his own income. So while a free market may permit private racist attitudes to survive—for not even market forces can regulate thought—bottom-line business considerations will render them impotent.

On the other hand, efforts to end whatever institutional racism still exists by using affirmative action are counterproductive and doomed to failure: (1) they discriminate in reverse against white males, and hence perpetuate the basic injustice of discrimination on the basis of involuntary group identity; (2) this fuels racial tensions by producing resentment on the part of those who lose out; (3) affirmative action further harms its intended beneficiaries by insinuating that double standards are needed for their advancement, suggesting, to my mind, that affirmative action orthodoxy is closer to a kind of racism than its advocates would care to admit; finally and perhaps most important of all, (4) the aims of affirmative action are impossible to realize without massive increases in centralized state power.

The institutionalization of double standards in such a way that no one could violate them and get away with it would require a massive governmental machinery. This supervision would ultimately lead to a controlled, fascistic economy instead of a free economy.[18] Now to my mind F. A. Hayek has provided the best and most extensive reasons for why supervision and coercive planning of this sort can only lead us down a "road to serfdom." Let us hope that we check our premises before we discover the hard way that the road is a dead end. □

1. For a more complete statement see my *Civil Wrongs*, work in progress.

2. Though some writers challenge the claim that there is today no direct discrimination; cf. Tom Beauchamp, "The Justification of Reverse Discrimination," in *Social Justice and Preferential Treatment*, eds. William T. Blackstone and Robert D. Heslep (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1977), pp. 34-110.

3. Thomas Sowell, *Civil Rights: Rhetoric or Reality?* (New York: Quill Paperbacks, 1984), p. 38.

4. Thomas Nagel, "A Defense of Affirmative Action," reprinted in *Ethical Theory and Business*, 3rd ed., eds. Tom L. Beauchamp and Norman E. Bowie (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1988), p. 346.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 346-7.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 346.

7. Cf. Sowell, *Civil Rights*, pp. 19-20.

8. For an in-depth exchange of views on the subject of groups, individuals, and moral agency see the articles by James W. Nickel, J. L. Cowan, Philip Silvestri, Paul W. Taylor, Michael D. Bayles, William A. Nunn, Roger Shiner, and Alan H. Goldman, all reprinted in *Reverse Discrimination*, ed. Barry R. Gross (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1977), pp. 288-347. Cf. also George Sher, "Groups and Justice," reprinted in *Moral Rights in the Workplace*, ed. Gertrude Ezorsky (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1987), pp. 253-58.

9. John Hospers, "Justice versus 'Social Justice,'" *The Freeman*, January 1985, pp. 9-24.

10. See e.g., Richard Wasserstrom, "A Defense of Programs of Preferential Treatment," in *Ethical Issues in Business*, 3rd ed., eds. Thomas Donaldson and Patricia H. Werbane (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1988), pp. 339-44.

11. This point is developed in more detail in *On Preferential Treatment*, ch. 4.

12. Quoted in Nathan Glazer, *Affirmative Discrimination* (New York: Basic Books, 1975), p. 45. The following quotes are also from Glazer, pp. 47f.

13. Frederick R. Lynch, *Invisible Victims: White Males and the Crisis of Affirmative Action* (Westport, Ct.: Greenwood Press, 1989).

14. F. A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944, 1976), p. 56.

15. For more details cf. *Civil Wrongs* sec. 4, from which the present section is excerpted.

16. For an extended development of this kind of argument see J. Boyle, G. Grisez, and O. Tollefsen, *Free Choice: A Self-Referential Argument* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976). The authors also do an admirable job of organizing the literature and sorting relevant issues from irrelevant ones.

17. Hayek, p. 59.

18. See Nicholas Capaldi, *Out of Order: Affirmative Action and the Crisis of Doctrinaire Liberalism* (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1986), esp. ch. 7, "The Politics of Affirmative Action."

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A REVIEWER'S
NOTEBOOK

Basic Communism

by John Chamberlain

To be confronted with the task of reviewing Clarence B. Carson's monumental *Basic Communism* (American Textbook Committee, P.O. Box 8, Wadley, AL 36276, 570 pages, $29.95 cloth) for a fixed deadline certainly causes mixed feelings. Each section provides pleasurable reading. But to be forced to gulp everything down in a few days is a cruel and unusual punishment. This book should be taken advisedly as a year's project. It is the only way to assure fairness.

As the author of innumerable Cold War period columns, I felt while reading it that I was living my life all over again at a tremendous clip. Carson tells his story from fragmentary beginnings. There was no real Communism until the 20th century. What we had were socialistic Brook Farms, descriptions of "voyages to Icarie," and Fabian Society lecture groups. We had also had the speculations of Marx and Engels, and we had a Russian named Lenin who, in his Swiss hideout, nurtured the idea that the "dictatorship of the proletariat" would necessarily involve seizure of the government of a whole state. Modern Communism, which he and his group of "professionals" imposed on Russia, had perforce to be a one-man show. Otherwise it would deteriorate (Carson uses the word "debacle") into regional enclaves very much as is happening now.

The modern Communists have been doing their best to disguise the mess they have made of Russia. But calculated disinformation can't hide what is happening. Carson doesn't fall for the idea that Stalin (whom Lenin feared for his "rudeness") perverted the course of Marxist-Leninist history. Like Max Eastman, Carson thinks one-man rule was inherent in the Marx-Engels philosophy from the beginning. It could have been Trotsky or Bukharin in Soviet Russia, or somebody besides Pol Pot and Ho Chi Minh in Indochina, or Che Guevera instead of Fidel Castro in Cuba.

Carson offers good biographical sketches of all his main characters. Before Marx, there were Robespierre and other totalitarians of the French Revolution. They lasted only a few months until Napoleon with his "whiff of grapeshot" stopped the guillotines. Carson stresses the contrasting vistas of the French and Russian revolutions. What Robespierre represented for a few months went on for some 27 years in the Russia of Lenin, Stalin, and Brezhnev.

Under the heading of "The Origin of Communism" Carson deals with dialectical materialism, the class struggle, the labor theory of value, and the idea of revolution itself. Then there is a diversion to explore utopianism, anarchism, and syndicalism. And there is a lengthy section on the history of Russia, its land and people. We get the full gruesome story of the murder of the Tsar and the whole Romanov family.

Lenin had his bursts of common sense. When starvation threatened in 1920 and 1921 he backtracked and proclaimed the New Economic Policy (NEP). Farmers had their own plots. There was a multiplicity of small businesses. With help from the United States, Russians began to eat again. But when Lenin died, Stalin, the clever infiltrator, decided that NEP-men would never be good Communists. After exiling the internationalist Trotsky, and taking over the slogan of "socialism in one country," Stalin instituted his series of five-year plans. Rich farmers (meaning those who could perhaps hire one or two helpers) were pursued as

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"kulaks." For the second time in 10 years Russia had a man-made famine on its hands as farming expertise disappeared.

News of the Ukraine famine was suppressed by Walter Duranty of *The New York Times*, who denied there was anything amiss in the Ukraine countryside. But two courageous and able correspondents, William Henry Chamberlin and Eugene Lyons, left Russia in order to write about the famine they had seen with their own eyes.

Carson thinks the murder of Kirov in Leningrad was connived at by Stalin, who needed reasons for his purges and the show trials that shocked the world. Carson mentions "four stages of terror." His authority is Solzhenitsyn, who has made the concept of the Gulag Archipelago known to the West in his remarkable books.

Any ordinary writer would have broken off with the Soviet section of a jam-packed book and called it a day. But Carson has to deal with the whole international thrust of Communism, with its "two faces." We learn about the creation of front organizations, the provoking of civil wars. There are sub-sections on Fascism in Italy, Nazism in Germany, and anarcho-syndicalism and "republicanism" in Spain. Finally, Carson has to tell us all about Fidel Castro, North Korea, and the whole Third World.

The danger in America, Carson says, comes from "secular humanism." "From the perspective of the rise and spread of Communism in the Twentieth Century," Carson writes, "secular humanism . . . is the undergirding doctrine of an international movement which has had as its object the conversion or conquest of the whole world."

But the worst hasn't happened. Gorbachev may not be our friend, but he obviously doesn't want to go down in history as another Stalin. □

BASIC COMMUNISM

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INDEX
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Bettina Bien Greaves

NOTE: In page references, the number preceding the colon designates the month, the numbers following refer to pages. All articles have at least three entries — author, title, and subject — except in a few cases when the title and the appropriate subject coincide. Books reviewed are listed alphabetically by their author(s) on page 480; the names of their reviewers are included in the master index.

A

ACADEMIC freedom at a public university (Lott) 3:112-115
ADVANCE guard of freedom (Barniskis) 4:124-125
AFFIRMATIVE action: the new road to serfdom (Yates) 12:461-472
AGRICULTURE
  America needs organic farming — and pesticides (J. Hood) 2:57-58
  Building a barn (Lapp) 5:172-175
  Crop controls and Indian raids in colonial Virginia (Pecquet) 2:59-60
  The grapes of opportunity (Lapp) 3:84-87
AIR bags — more government hot air? (Young) 9:341-342
ALASKA'S *other* oil spill (Jackstadt & Lee) 1:8-11
AMADOR, Jorge
  Edwin Armstrong: genius of FM radio. 4:126-130
  Rising prices: the market's way of conserving oil. 11:433-435.
  See also Book reviews (Perl)
AMERICA needs organic farming — and pesticides (J. Hood) 2:57-58
ANDERSON, Bill
  Freedom of speech/freedom of ownership. 9:353
ANIMAL rights
  Animal rights are an individual responsibility (Hill) 4:151-156
  Environmentalism: freedom's foe for the '90s (Bidinotto) 11:409-419
ANOTHER world (Lesher) 9:354
AQUACULTURE: the birth of an industry (Phillips) 9:343-346
ARBUCKLE, John: entrepreneur, trust buster, humanitarian (Coppin) 5:192-195
ARMENTANO, D. T.
  Auto insurance chaos in California. 3:93-94
ARMSTRONG, Edwin: genius of FM radio (Amador) 4:126-130
ART
  Art, censorship, and markets (Yates) 3:106-107
  Freedom of speech/freedom of ownership (Anderson) 9:353
  "That's already been settled" (Zarbin) 6:233-234
AUTO insurance chaos in California (Armentano) 3:93-94

B

BAIRD, Charles W.
  On the right to strike. 10:387-391
  Solidarity and labor law reform in the 1990s. 6:224-225
  See Book reviews (Kirzner)
BANDOW, Doug. *See* Book reviews (Moskos)
BANKING scandal, great (Sennholz) 11:404-405
BARBARISM, education and the racist road to (Reisman) 10:364-370
BARNISKIS, Andrew E.
  The advance guard of freedom. 4:124-125
  A tale of two estates. 8:303-304
BEISNER, E. Calvin. *See* Book reviews (Kirk)
BEYOND eminent domain (Ownby) 3:108-110
BIDINOTTO, Robert James
  Environmentalism: freedom's foe for the '90s. 11:409-419
  See also Readers' forum, 1:33-37
BOEHM, R. W.
  School budgets and town meetings. 9:338-339
BOETTKE, Peter J.
  Soviet admissions: communism doesn't work. 2:50-56
  See also Book reviews (Brzezinski)
BOOM time for state and local government (J. Hood) 11:406-408
BOUDREAUX, Donald J.
  Markets and pseudo-markets. 11:421-423
BRODIN, Eric
  Sweden: no model for Eastern Europe. 11:426-428
BROWN, David M. *See* Book reviews (Machan; Mencken; Sowell)
BUILDING a barn (Lapp) 5:172-175
BUREAUCRACY Another world (Lesher) 9:354

C

CABLE TV needs competition (Merline) 10:382-386
CAPITALISM
  Other side of Adam Smith (Irvine) 2:47-49
  You missed the point, Bernie (D.G.Smith) 12:454-455
CAPITALISM and the environment (Machan) 7:249-257
CENSORSHIP, art, and markets (Yates) 3:106-107
CENSUS: eyes of the intrusive state (Johnson) 9:324-327
CHAMBERLAIN, John. *See* Book reviews
CHAOS theory
  Two-edged sword of chaos (McGath) 11:429-432
CHARITY, voluntary
  John Arbuckle: entrepreneur, trust buster, humanitarian (Coppin) 5:192-195
  Politics of compassion (Irvine) 10:374-375
  Wealth, freedom and philanthropy (Frumkin) 6:231-232
CHILD care, children
  Building a barn (Lapp) 5:172-175
  Fostering the system (A. & M. Rogers) 7:268-271
  Grapes of opportunity (Lapp) 3:84-87
CHINA
  Freeman interview: Wan Runnan (Pruzin) 5:176-182
  Kun shou you dou: even a cornered beast will fight (M.Smith) 12:446-454
CHODES, John
  Friendly societies: voluntary social security — and more. 3:95-98
CIVIL rights
  Affirmative action: the new road to serfdom (Yates) 12:461-472
  Military's secret war against racism (Nichols) 7:244-246
  See also Individual rights/action
CIVILIZATION and culture, Western
  Education and the racist road to barbarism (Reisman) 10:364-370
COERCION/compulsion
  Ezekiel's job (Foley) 9:330-334
  School budgets and town meetings (Boehm) 9:338-339
  What's happened to community spirit? (Payne) 9:328-329
COLE, Julio H.
  The writings of Adam Smith. 2:44-46
  See also Book reviews (Meiners & Amacher)
COMING push for national health care (Wasley) 1:30-32
COMMUNAL politics in India (Prasad) 1:26-27
COMMUNISM doesn't work, Soviet admissions (Boettke) 2:50-56
COMPARABLE worth: feminism turning to paternalism (McElroy) 10:380-381
COMPETITION vs. monopoly
  Cable TV needs competition (Merline) 10:382-386
  John Arbuckle: entrepreneur, trust buster, humanitarian (Coppin) 5:192-195
CONSERVATION
  Great 19th-century timber heist revisited (Iijima & Shaw) 4:137-141
CONSUMER safety, let the market protect (J. Hood) 4:142-143
CONSUMER sovereignty (Greaves) 6:222-223
COPPIN, Clayton A.
  John Arbuckle: entrepreneur, trust buster, humanitarian. 5:192-195
COPYRIGHT
  Freeing digital audio (Taylor) 4:131-132
CORRUPTION, political, taproots of (W.H.Peterson) 12:456-459
CROP controls and Indian raids in colonial Virginia (Pecquet) 2:59-60

D

DEKKERS, Fred
  The nature of government. 11:436-437

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DEMOCRACY
Freedom and democracy are different (Wenders) 8:288-289
Nature of government (Dekkers) 11:436-437
DIGITAL audio, freeing (Taylor) 4:131-132
DiLORENZO, Thomas J.
The genesis of industrial policy. 6:226-230
National service: a solution in search of a problem. 3:99-103
DISASTER relief, federal, saying no to (Irvine) 3:104-105
DOTI, James
Io leggo e scrivo. 8:284-288
The price of chiminelli seeds and Regulation Q. 1:4-7
Roger and Me and free enterprise. 5:196-197
DRUGS and dumbness (Matthew) 4:133

E

"EARMARKED MONEY" illusion (Irvine) 4:149-150
EASTERN Europe: the economic stakes are high (Small) 5:185-187
ECONOMIC development/progress
Failures and fallacies of foreign aid (Osterfeld) 2:61-71
Ongoing struggle for liberty: reasons for optimism (Lee & McKenzie) 7:262-267
Social role of private property rights (Smiley) 5:167-168
ECONOMIC planning
Census: eyes of the intrusive state (Johnson) 9:324-327
Genesis of industrial policy (DiLorenzo) 6:226-230
Two-edged sword of chaos (McGath) 11:429-432
ECONOMIC reform
Israel's grassroots libertarian revolution (Lehman-Wilzig) 4:144-148
Soviet economic reforms: an inside perspective (Maltsev) 3:88-92
ECONOMIC wisdom of *A Connecticut Yankee* (Shannon) 6:204-205
ECONOMICS, mathematical
Two-edged sword of chaos (McGath) 11:429-432
EDUCATION and the racist road to barbarism (Reisman) 10:364-370
EDUCATION, college/university
Academic freedom at a public university (Lott) 3:112-115
University with a future (Liggio) 7:273-274
EDUCATION, private
From gangland to corporate America (Granville) 6:213-218
Right kind of social activism (Walter) 7:247-248
ELLIOTT, Nick. *See* Book reviews (Shand)
EMINENT domain, beyond (Ownby) 3:108-110
EMPLOYEE ownership: a rapidly growing threat to a free market (Murphey) 7:258-261
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Consumer sovereignty (Greaves) 6:222-223
John Arbuckle: entrepreneur, trust buster, humanitarian (Coppin) 5:192-195
ENVIRONMENT and pollution
Aquaculture: the birth of an industry (Phillips) 9:343-346
Capitalism and the environment (Machan) 7:249-257
Private property rights: an endangered species (Kamenar) 5:164-167
ENVIRONMENTALISM: freedom's foe for the '90s (Bidinotto) 11:409-419
EUROPE, Eastern
Eastern Europe: the economic stakes are high (Small) 5:186-187
Message from Eastern Europe (W.H.Peterson) 5:187-191
"Socialism works" (Pyburn) 12:460
Sweden: no model for Eastern Europe (Brodin) 12:426-428
What we should teach the Eastern Europeans (Machan) 1:23-25
EZEKIEL'S job (Foley) 9:330-334

F

FAILURES and fallacies of foreign aid (Osterfeld) 2:61-71.
FAMILY
Building a barn (Lapp) 5:172-175
Manipulating the traditional family (Leithart) 10:376-379
FIRST civil right is safety (Matthew) 9:348-349
FISH farming/ranching
Aquaculture: the birth of an industry (Phillips) 9:343-346
FLAG and freedom: which should we protect? (Mataconis) 2:76-77
FM RADIO, Edwin Armstrong, genius of (Amador) 4:126-130
FOLEY, Ridgway K., Jr.
Ezekiel's job. 9:330-334
The theory of due reparations. 6:209-212
FOLLY of rent control (Maccaro) 1:14-15
FOLSOM, Roger Nils & Gonzalez, Rodolfo Alejo
U. S. trade deficits aren't a problem. 8:310-315
FOREIGN aid
Failures and fallacies of foreign aid (Osterfeld) 2:61-71
Trickle up: a solution to Third World poverty (Sall) 4:134-136
FORESTRY, lumbering, logging
Great 19th-century timber heist revisited (Iijima & Shaw) 4:137-141
Saving a forest: what can we do? (M.Reed) 5:169-171
FOSTERING the system (A. & M. Rogers) 7:268-271
FREE enterprise
Economic wisdom of *A Connecticut Yankee* (Shannon) 6:204-205
FREEDOM
Ongoing struggle for liberty: reasons for optimism (Lee & McKenzie) 7:262-267
Where are the sons of liberty? (Ream) 10:371-373
FREEDOM and democracy are different (Wenders) 8:288-289
FREEDOM of choice
Drugs and dumbness (Matthew) 4:133
Ezekiel's job (Foley) 9:330-334
FREEDOM of speech/freedom of ownership (Anderson) 9:353
FREEDOM of speech/thought
Academic freedom at a public university (Lott) 3:112-115
Strongest man (McGath) 9:335-337
FREEING digital audio (Taylor) 4:131-132
FREEMAN interview: Wan Runnan (Pruzin) 5:176-182
FRIENDLY societies: voluntary social security —and more (Chodes) 3:95-98
FROM gangland to corporate America (Granville) 6:213-218
FRUMKIN, Peter
Wealth, freedom, and philanthropy. 6:231-232
FULMER, Richard W.
The Social Security trust fund: "savings" vs. saving. 8:308-309

G

GARNER, Al
Low life. 7:271-272
GENERAL Motors
Roger and Me and free enterprise (Doti) 5:196-197
GENESIS of industrial policy (DiLorenzo) 6:226-230
GLORY be! (Read) 12:444-445
GONZALEZ, Rodolfo Alejo (co-author) *See* Folsom
GORDON, Hal. *See* Book reviews (van Wolferen)
GOVERNMENT isn't living up to its contract (Koopman) 10:392-393
GOVERNMENT, local (city/state)
Auto insurance chaos in California (Armentano) 3:93-94
Beyond eminent domain (Ownby) 3:108-110
Boom time for state and local government (J. Hood) 11:406-408
Municipal services: unfair competition from local governments (Tomlinson) 8:305-306
Progressivism comes to Houston (Phillips) 2:72-75
School budgets and town meetings (Boehm) 9:338-339
Strongest man (McGath) 9:335-337
GOVERNMENT regulation/intervention
Affirmative action: the new road to serfdom (Yates) 12:461-472
Air bags — more government hot air? (Young) 9:341-342
Animal rights are an individual responsibility (Hill) 4:151-156
Aquaculture: the birth of an industry (Phillips) 9:343-346
Cable TV needs competition (Merline) 10:382-386
Genesis of industrial policy (DiLorenzo) 6:226-230

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Great banking scandal (Sennholz) 11:404-405
Growth of government in the United States (Higgs) 8:290-295
Mandated airline safety seats won't increase travel safety (Semmens) 9:340-341
Manipulating the traditional family (Leithart) 10:376-379
Message from Eastern Europe (W.H.Peterson) 5:187-191
GOVERNMENT, role of
First civil right is safety (Matthew) 9:348-349
Nature of government (Dekkers) 11:436-437
Rights, law, and morality (Rasmussen) 9:350-352
GOVERNMENT spending
Alaska's *other* oil spill (Jackstadt & Lee) 1:8-11
"Earmarked money" illusion (Irvine) 4:149-150
GRAPES of opportunity (Lapp) 3:84-87
GRANVILLE, William, Jr.
From gangland to corporate America 6:213-218
GREAT banking scandal (Sennholz) 11:404-405
GREAT 19th-century timber heist revisited (Iijima & Shaw) 4:137-141
GREAVES, Bettina Bien
Consumer sovereignty. 6:222-223
GROWTH of government in the United States (Higgs) 8:290-295

H

HELSTROM, Carl. *See* Book reviews (Beito)
HIGGS, Robert
The growth of government in the United States. 8:290-295
HILL, Cherry
Animal rights are an individual responsibility. 4:151-156
HOMELESSNESS
Room with a new view (Lopez) 1:28-29
HONG KONG, "crown jewel" of capitalism (R.A. Peterson) 1:16-22
HOOD, David. *See* Book reviews (Sowell)
HOOD, John
America needs organic farming — and pesticides. 2:57-58
Boom time for state and local government. 11:406-408
Let the market protect consumer safety. 4:142-143
HOUSTON, progressivism comes to (Phillips) 2:72-75
HUNTER, Barbara R.
The myth of public/private "cooperative enterprises." 11:424-425

I

IDEAS, ideologies
Advance guard of freedom (Barniskis) 4:124-125
Education and the racist road to barbarism (Reisman) 10:364-370
Growth of government in the United States (Higgs) 8:290-295
Strongest man (McGath) 9:335-337
IIJIMA, T. J. and Shaw, Jane S.
The great 19th-century timber heist revisited. 4:137-141
INDIA, communal politics in (Prasad) 1:26-27
INDIVIDUAL rights/action
Ezekiel's job (Foley) 9:330-334
First civil right is safety (Matthew) 9:348-349
Glory be! (Read) 12:444-445
Military's secret war against racism (Nichols) 7:244-246
Rights, law, and morality (Rasmussen) 9:350-352
Saving a forest: what can we do? (M.Reed) 5:169-171
Strongest man (McGath) 9:335-337
What we should teach Eastern Europeans (Machan) 1:23-25
INDUSTRIAL policy, genesis of (DiLorenzo) 6:226-230
INSURANCE
Auto insurance chaos in California (Armentano) 3:93-94
Friendly societies: voluntary social security — and more (Chodes) 3:95-98
INTEREST rates and Regulation Q
Price of chiminelli seeds and Regulation Q (Doti) 1:4-7
INVESTOR as hero (Irvine) 1:12-13
IO LEGGO e scrivo (Doti) 8:284-288
IRVINE, William B.
The "earmarked money" illusion. 4:149-150
The investor as hero. 1:12-13
The last wild children of capitalism. 8:296-299
The other side of Adam Smith. 2:47-49
The politics of compassion. 10:374-375
Saying no to federal disaster relief. 3:104-105
Taking the train to Metamora. 6:206-208
ISRAEL'S grassroots libertarian revolution (Lehman-Wilzig) 4:144-148
ITALY and Mussolini
Genesis of industrial policy (DiLorenzo) 6:226-230
Io leggo e scrivo (Doti) 8:284-288

J

JACKSTADT, Stephen L. & Lee, Dwight R.
Alaska's *other* oil spill. 1:8-11
JOHNSON, Erik A.
The census: eyes of the intrusive state. 9:324-327
JUSTICE, rule of law
Theory of due reparations (Foley) 6:209-212

K

KAMENAR, Paul D.
Private property rights: an endangered species. 5:164-167
KIBBE, Matthew B. *See* Book reviews (Williams)
KOOPMAN, Roger
Government isn't living up to its contract. 10:392-393
KORVES, Ross C.
What makes a market? 9:347-348
KUN shou you dou: even a cornered beast will fight (M.Smith) 12:446-454

L

LABOR, labor unions, wages
Comparable worth: feminism turning to paternalism (McElroy) 10:380-381
Employee ownership: a rapidly growing threat to a free market (Murphey) 7:258-261
On the right to strike (Baird) 10:387-391
Patience and property: corporate vs. union management (Lee & Sexton) 8:300-302
Solidarity and labor law reform in the 1990s (Baird) 6:224-225
LAND use/management, governmental
Alaska's *other* oil spill (Jackstadt & Lee) 1:8-11
Beyond eminent domain (Ownby) 3:108-110
Municipal services: unfair competition from local governments (Tomlinson) 8:305-306
Private property rights: an endangered species (Kamenar) 5:164-167
Progressivism comes to Houston (Phillips) 2:72-75
Tale of two estates (Barniskis) 8:303-304
LAPP, Hannah
Building a barn. 5:172-175
Grapes of opportunity. 3:84-87
See also Book reviews (Bovard)
LAST wild children of capitalism (Irvine) 8:296-299
LEE, Dwight R. & McKenzie, Richard B.
The ongoing struggle for liberty: reasons for optimism. 7:262-267
_____ & Sexton, Robert L.
Patience and property: corporate vs. union management. 8:300-302
_____ (co-author) *See* Jackstadt
LEHMAN-WILZIG, Sam
Israel's grassroots libertarian revolution. 4:144-148
LEITHART, Peter J.
Manipulating the traditional family. 10:376-379
LESHER, Richard L.
Another world. 9:354
LESSONS in liberty: Hong Kong, "crown jewel" of capitalism (R.A.Peterson) 1:16-22
LET the market protect consumer safety (J. Hood) 4:142-143
LIGGIO, Leonard P.
A university with a future. 7:273-274
LOPEZ, Steve
A room with a new view. 1:28-29
LOTT, John R., Jr.
Academic freedom at a public university. 3:112-115
See also Readers' forum, 7:275
LOW life (Garner) 7:271-272

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

M

MACCARO, James A.
The folly of rent control. 1:14-15
MACHAN, Tibor R.
Capitalism and the environment. 7:249-257
What we should teach the Eastern Europeans. 1:23-25
MALTSEV, Yuri N.
Soviet economic reforms: an inside perspective. 3:88-92
MANDATED airline safety seats won't increase travel safety (Semmens) 9:340-341
MANIPULATING the traditional family (Leithart) 10:376-379
MARKET economy
Two-edged sword of chaos (McGath) 11:429-432
What makes a market? (Korves) 9:347-348
MARKETS and pseudo-markets (Boudreaux) 11:421-423
MATACONIS, Douglas
The flag and freedom: which should we protect? 2:76-77
Misdirected compassion. 8:306-307
MATTHEW, Scott C.
Drugs and dumbness. 4:133
The first civil right is safety. 9:348-349
McELROY, Wendy
Comparable worth: feminism turning to paternalism. 10:380-381
McGATH, Gary
The strongest man. 9:335-337
The two-edged sword of chaos. 11:429-432
McKENZIE, Richard G. (co-author) *See* Lee
MEDICAL care
Coming push for national health care (Wasley) 1:30-32
MERLINE, John
Cable TV needs competition. 10:382-386
MESSAGE from Eastern Europe (W.H.Peterson) 5:187-191
MILITARY'S secret war against racism (Nichols) 7:244-246
MISDIRECTED compassion (Mataconis) 8:306-307
MISES, Ludwig von — ideas of
Consumer sovereignty (Greaves) 6:222-223
Nature of government (Dekkers) 11:436-437
Perestroika's missing ingredient (Pasour) 219-221
MONEY, inflation, banking
Great banking scandal (Sennholz) 11:404-405
MORALITY/religion
Ezekiel's job (Foley) 9:330-334
Rights, law, and morality (Rasmussen) 9:350-352
MUNICIPAL services: unfair competition from local governments (Tomlinson) 8:305-306
MURPHEY, Dwight D.
Employee ownership: a rapidly growing threat to a free market. 7:258-261
See also Readers' forum, 10:393-394
MYTH of public/private "cooperative enterprises" (Hunter) 11:424-425

N

NATIONAL service: a solution in search of a problem (DiLorenzo) 3:99-103
NATURE OF GOVERNMENT (Dekkers) 11:436-437
NICHOLS, Lee
The military's secret war against racism. 7:244-246

O

OIL, rising prices, the market's way of conserving (Amador) 11:433-435
OIL spill, Alaska's other (Jackstadt & Lee) 1:8-11
ON THE RIGHT to strike (Baird) 10:387-391
ONGOING struggle for liberty: reasons for optimism (Lee & McKenzie) 7:262-267
ORGANIC farming — and pesticides, America needs (J. Hood) 2:57-58
OSTERFELD, David
The failures and fallacies of foreign aid. 2:61-71
OTHER side of Adam Smith (Irvine) 2:47-49
OWNBY, Lee
Beyond eminent domain. 3:108-110
See also Readers' forum, 7:274-275

P

PASOUR, E. C., Jr.
Perestroika's missing ingredient. 6:219-221
PATIENCE and property: corporate vs. union management (Lee & Sexton) 8:300-302
PAYNE, James L.
The real case against taxes. 5:183-184
What's happened to community spirit? 9:328-329
PECQUET, Gary M.
Crop controls and Indian raids in colonial Virginia. 2:59-60
PERESTROIKA'S missing ingredient (Pasour) 6:219-221
PERSON, Lawrence. *See* Book reviews (Shelton)
PETERSON, Robert A.
Lessons in liberty: Hong Kong, "crown jewel" of capitalism. 1:16-22
PETERSON, William H.
The message from Eastern Europe. 5:187-191
The taproots of political corruption. 12:456-459
See also Book reviews (Block)
PHILLIPS, J. Brian
Aquaculture: the birth of an industry. 9:343-346
Progressivism comes to Houston. 2:72-75
PLAYING hard ball (Pyburn) 3:111
POLITICAL action/pressure
Coming push for national health care (Wasley) 1:30-32
Strongest man (McGath) 9:335-337
Taproots of political corruption, (W.H.Peterson) 12:456-459
POLITICS of compassion (Irvine) 10:374-375
POVERTY, government programs and Misdirected compassion (Mataconis) 8:306-307
PRASAD, Rayasam V.
Communal politics in India 1:26-27
PRICE of chiminelli seeds and Regulation Q (Doti) 1:4-7
PRICES/pricing, and price controls
Crop controls and Indian raids in colonial Virginia (Pecquet) 2:59-60
Price of chiminelli seeds and Regulation Q (Doti) 1:4-7
Rising prices: the market's way of conserving oil (Amador) 11:433-435
PRIVATE property
Aquaculture: the birth of an industry (Phillips) 9:343-346
Capitalism and the environment (Machan) 7:249-257
Freedom and democracy are different (Wenders) 8:288-289
Low life (Garner) 7:271-272
Markets and pseudo-markets (Boudreaux) 11:421-423
Perestroika's missing ingredient (Pasour) 6:219-221
Saving a forest; what can we do? (M.Reed) 5:169-171
Tale of two estates (Barniskis) 8:303-304
See also Land use/management
PRIVATE property rights: an endangered species (Kamenar) 5:164-167
PRIVATE property rights, social role of (Smiley) 5:167-168
PROGRESSIVISM comes to Houston (Phillips) 2:72-75
PRUZIN, Daniel R.
Freeman interview: Wan Runnan. 5:176-182
PSEUDO-MARKETS, markets and (Boudreaux) 11:421-423
PYBURN, Evelyn
Playing hard ball. 3:111
"Socialism works." 12:460

R

RACIAL minorities
Affirmative action: the new road to serfdom (Yates) 12:461-472
Education and the racist road to barbarism (Reisman) 10:364-370
From gangland to corporate America (Granville) 6:213-218
Military's secret war against racism (Nichols) 7:244-246
Right kind of social activism (Walter) 7:247-248
RASMUSSEN, Douglas B.
Rights, law, and morality. 9:350-352
READ, Leonard E.
Glory be! 12:444-445
REAL case against taxes (Payne) 5:183-184
REAM, Norman S.
Where are the sons of liberty? 10:371-373

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

REED, Michael
Saving a forest: what can we do? 5:169-171
REISMAN, George
Education and the racist road to barbarism. 10:364-370
RENT control, folly of (Maccaro) 1:14-15
RIGHT kind of social activism (Walter) 7:247-248
RIGHTS, law, and morality (Rasmussen) 9:350-352
RISING prices: the market's way of conserving oil (Amador) 11:433-435
ROGER and Me and free enterprise (Doti) 5:196-197
ROGERS, Ann and Michael
Fostering the system. 7:268-271
ROME, ancient
Taproots of political corruption (W.H.Peterson) 12:456-459
ROOM with a new view (Lopez) 1:28-29
RUSSIA *See* U.S.S.R.

S

SAFETY regulation
Air bags — more government hot air? (Young) 9:341-342
Mandated airline safety seats won't increase travel safety (Semmens) 9:340-341
SALL, Barbara
Trickle up: a solution to third world poverty. 4:134-136
SAVING a forest: what can we do? (M.Reed) 5:169-171
SAVINGS and investment
Social Security trust fund: "savings" vs. saving (Fulmer) 8:308-309
SAYING no to federal disaster relief (Irvine) 3:104-105
SCHOOL budgets and town meetings (Boehm) 9:338-339
SELF-IMPROVEMENT
Glory be! (Read) 12:444-445
Room with a new view (Lopez) 1:28-29
SEMMENS, John
Mandated airline safety seats won't increase travel safety. 9:340-341
SENNHOLZ, Hans F.
The great banking scandal. 11:404-405
SEXTON, Robert L. (co-author) *See* Lee
SHANNON, Russell
The economic wisdom of *A Connecticut Yankee.* 6:204-205
See also Book reviews (Aganbegyan; Bhagwati; Hough)
SHAW, Jane S. (co-author) *See* Iijima
SMALL, Gary V.
Eastern Europe: the economic stakes are high. 5:185-187
SMILEY, Gene
The social role of private property rights. 5:167-168
SMITH, Adam — ideas of
Other side of (Irvine) 2:47-49
Writings of (Cole) 2:44-46
SMITH, Donald G.
You missed the point, Bernie. 12:454-455
SMITH, Marcella
Kun shou you dou: even a cornered beast will fight. 12:446-454
SOCIAL reform/engineering
Affirmative action: the new road to serfdom (Yates) 12:461-472
Comparable worth: feminism turning to paternalism (McElroy) 10:380-381
Fostering the system (A. & M. Rogers) 7:268-271
Manipulating the traditional family (Leithart) 10:376-379
SOCIAL role of private property rights (Smiley) 5:167-168
SOCIAL Security trust fund: "savings" vs. saving (Fulmer) 8:308-309
SOCIAL Security, voluntary
Friendly societies: voluntary social security — and more (Chodes) 3:95-98
SOCIALISM, "soft" (Fabian welfarism)
Message from Eastern Europe (W.H.Peterson) 5:187-191
"SOCIALISM works" (Pyburn) 12:460
SOLIDARITY and labor law reform in the 1990s (Baird) 6:224-225
SOVIET admissions: communism doesn't work (Boettke) 2:50-56
SOVIET economic reforms: an inside perspective (Maltsev) 3:88-92
SPORTS
Municipal services: unfair competition from local governments (Tomlinson) 8:305-306
Playing hard ball (Pyburn) 3:111
STOCK market
Investor as hero (Irvine) 1:12-13
Last wild children of capitalism (Irvine) 8:296-299
STRONGEST man (McGath) 9:335-337
SUBSIDIES
Art, censorship, and markets (Yates) 3:106-107
Myth of public/private "cooperative enterprises" (Hunter) 11:424-425
Playing hard ball (Pyburn) 3:111
Politics of compassion (Irvine) 10:374-375
"That's already been settled" (Zarbin) 6:233-234
SWEDEN: no model for Eastern Europe (Brodin) 11:426-428

T

TAKING the train to Metamora (Irvine) 6:206-208
TALE of two estates (Barniskis) 8:303-304
TAPROOTS of political corruption (W.H.Peterson) 12:456-459
TAXATION
Boom time for state and local government (J. Hood) 11:406-408
Growth of government in the United States (Higgs) 8:290-295
Manipulating the traditional family (Leithart) 10:376-379
Real case against taxes (Payne) 5:183-184
School budgets and town meetings (Boehm) 9:338-339
TAYLOR, Jeff A.
Freeing digital audio. 4:131-132
"THAT'S already been settled" (Zarbin) 6:233-234
THEORY of due reparations (Foley) 6:209-212
THIRD world
Failures and fallacies of foreign aid (Osterfeld) 2:61-71
Trickle up: a solution to third world poverty (Sall) 4:134-136
TOLERANCE
Ezekiel's job (Foley) 9:330-334
TOMLINSON, Bill
Municipal services unfair competition from local governments. 8:305-306
TRADE, international
U. S. trade deficits aren't a problem (Folsom & Gonzalez) 8:310-315
TRANSPORTATION
Air bags — more government hot air? (Young) 9:341-342
Mandated airline safety seats won't increase travel safety (Semmens) 9:340-341
Taking the train to Metamora (Irvine) 6:206-208
TRICKLE up: a solution to third world poverty (Sall) 4:134-135
TWAIN, Mark — ideas of
Economic wisdom of *A Connecticut Yankee* (Shannon) 6:204-205
TWO-EDGED sword of chaos (McGath) 11:429-432

U

UNIVERSITY with a future (Liggio) 7:273-274
U. S. HISTORY (pre-Revolution, colonial)
Crop controls and Indian raids in colonial Virginia (Pecquet) 2:59-60
Where are the sons of liberty? (Ream) 10:371-373
U. S. SUPREME COURT (misc. decisions)
Flag and freedom: which should we protect? (Mataconis) 2:76-77
Military's secret war against racism (Nichols) 7:244-246
On the right to strike (Baird) 10:387-391
Where are the sons of liberty? (Ream) 10:371-373
U. S. TRADE deficits aren't a problem (Folsom & Gonzalez) 8:310-315
U.S.S.R.
Consumer sovereignty (Greaves) 6:222-223
Perestroika's missing ingredient (Pasour) 6:219-221
Soviet admissions: communism doesn't work (Boettke) 2:50-56
Soviet economic reforms: an inside perspective (Maltsev) 3:88-92
What makes a market? (Korves) 9:347-348

W

WALTER, Edward
The right kind of social activism. 7:247-248
WAN Runnan, *Freeman* interview (Pruzin) 5:176-182
WASLEY, Terree P.
The coming push for national health care. 1:30-32
WEALTH, freedom, and philanthropy (Frumkin) 6:231-232

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WENDERS, John T.
Freedom and democracy are different 8:288-289
WHAT makes a market? (Korves) 9:347-348
WHAT we should teach the Eastern Europeans (Machan) 1:23-25
WHAT'S happened to community spirit? (Payne) 9:328-329
WHERE are the sons of liberty? (Ream) 10:371-373
WOMEN
Comparable worth: feminism turning to paternalism (McElroy) 10:380-381
WRITINGS of Adam Smith (Cole) 2:44-46

XYZ

YATES, Steven
Affirmative action: the new road to serfdom. 12:461-472
Art, censorship, and markets. 3:106-107
YOU missed the point, Bernie (D.G.Smith) 12:454-455
YOUNG, Anthony
Air bags — more government hot air? 9:341-342
YOUTH corps
National service: a solution in search of a problem (DiLorenzo) 3:99-103
ZARBIN, Earl
"That's already been settled." 6:233-234
ZONING
Progressivism comes to Houston (Phillips) 2:72-75

BOOK REVIEWS

(Reviewer's name in parentheses)

AGANBEGYAN, Abel. *Inside Perestroika: the future of the Soviet economy* (Shannon) 10:396-397
ALLEN, William R. *The midnight economist: meditations on truth and public policy* (Chamberlain) 1:38-39
AMACHER, Ryan C. (co-ed.) *See* Meiners
BANDOW, Doug. *The politics of plunder: misgovernment in Washington* (Chamberlain) 11:438-439
BEITO, David T. *Taxpayers in revolt: tax resistance during the great depression* (Helstrom) 4:158-159
BHAGWATI, Jagdish. *Protectionism* (Shannon) 1:39-40
BLOCK, Walter (ed.) *Economics and the environment: a reconciliation* (W.H.Peterson) 9:359-360
BOVARD, James. *The farm fiasco* (Lapp) 9:356-357
BRYAN, Frank & McClaughry, John. *The Vermont papers: recreating democracy on a human scale* (Chamberlain) 4:157-158
BRZEZINSKI, Zbigniew. *The grand failure: the birth and death of communism in the twentieth century* (Boettke) 3:117-119
CARSON, Clarence B. *Basic Communism* (Chamberlain) 12:473-474
FECHER, Charles A. (ed.) *See* Mencken
GOODMAN, John C. & Marotz-Baden, Ramona. *Fighting the war of ideas in Latin America* (Chamberlain) 10:395-396
HESSEN, Robert. *Breaking with communism: the intellectual odyssey of Bertram D. Wolfe* (Chamberlain) 9:355-356
HOUGH, Jerry F. *Opening up the Soviet Union* (Shannon) 2:79-80
KIRK, Russell. *Economics: work and prosperity* (Beisner) 6:238-239
KIRZNER, Israel M. *Discovery, capitalism, and distributive justice* (Baird) 8:318-320
MACHAN, Tibor. *Individuals and their rights* (Brown) 6:236-238
MAROTZ-BADEN, Ramona (co-author) *See* Goodman
McCLAUGHRY (co-author). *See* Bryan
MEINERS, Roger E. & Amacher, Ryan C. (eds.) *Federal support of higher education: the growing challenge to intellectual freedom* (Cole) 6:239-240
MENCKEN, H. L., *The diary of.* Charles A. Fecher, ed. (Brown) 7:277-279
MINER, Craig. *Grede of Milwaukee* (Chamberlain) 3:116-117
MOSKOS, Charles C. *A call to civic service: national service for country and community* (Bandow) 5:199-200
NISBET, Robert. *The quest for community* (Chamberlain) 8:317-318
NOZICK, Robert. *The examined life* (Chamberlain) 5:198-199
PERL, William R. *The Holocaust conspiracy: an international policy of genocide* (Amador) 7:279-280
SCHALL, James Vincent. *Religion, wealth and poverty* (Chamberlain) 6:235-236
SHAND, Alexander. *Free market morality: the political economy of the Austrian School* (Elliott) 11:439-440
SHELTON, Judy. *The coming Soviet crash: Gorbachev's desperate pursuit of credit in western financial markets* (Person) 9:357-358
SITHOLE, Ndabaningi. *The secret of American success: Africa's great hope* (Chamberlain) 2:78-79
SOHAR, Ezra. *Israel's dilemma: why Israel is falling apart and how to put it back together* (Chamberlain) 7:276-277
SOWELL, Thomas. *Choosing a college: a guide for parents and students* (D.Hood) 3:119-120
_____. *Preferential policies: an international perspective* (Brown) 10:397-399
van WOLFEREN, Karel. *The enigma of Japanese power* (Gordon) 4:159-160
WILLIAMS, Walter E. *South Africa's war against capitalism* (Kibbe) 10:399-400

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